Regent receives call from Saleh

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday received a telephone call from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who congratulated the Crown Prince on His Majesty King Hussein's full recovery. Saleh wished King Hussein a safe return

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AMMAN MONDAY, JANUARY II, 1999, RAMADAN 24, 1419

Price: Jordan 200 Fils

Centre-left PDP wins Nigerian state elections

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LAGOS (AFP) — The cenne left Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won Nigeria's weekend regional elections, confirming its place as the country's leading political party, official election results showed Sunday. With 33 of 35 states having declared results Sunday, the PDP of former military ruler General Olusaeun Obasanjo won 18 goverporships, against nine for the centre-right All Peoples Party and six for the radical Alliance for Democracy. (See story on a cellular e

More than 90 massacred in Colombia

hun the par-BOGOTA (R) - Churchgoers were among the latest vicintroving her edition. On tims of Colombia's right-wing Callular (up g death squads, who have killed ! trimeles pomore than 90 people in a he to the made bloody rampage across four her way to be northern provinces since Thursday, authorities said on Sunday. The most horrifying h ad Me incident occurred in Playon de : Washingtonk Grozco, a village in Magdalera province, where alleged members of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia scrap dracone (AUC) slaughtered at least 21 people on Saturday.

Kuwait journalists convey wherethe brand Israel visit 'irresponsible'

the payor likely KUWAIT CITY (AFP) -NAME OF THE O i Russians to tion on Sunday branded a visit the trests as by one of its members to Israel 'an irresponsible act' and the have long rate warned it would "take appropenng pickwiri priate measures." Harned Buyabes's visit to the Jewish state creates "a dangerous precedent and harms Kuwait's tress which refuses all contact Louising and with the Zionist enemy," said والأفراد التاليم الم a statement quoted by the offin to the centre of cal KUNA news agency. interface 2 Buyabes told Arabic newspanumbed reports pers in London that he had (a) - 12 - 12 Mag. visited Israel in mid-Decem-ALONG ROBES ber for interviews with its S. 130 . . . leadership, including Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu. ese tamily unit

'DNA tests end rumours Clinton fathered child'

ការក្រុងក្រុងខ្លាំ 🕏 . . Promings Life WASHINGTON (AFP) has morpholis DNA tests have proved that U.S. President Bill Clinton did TOX figher the son of a former nele sharman prosinute. Time magazine स्तेत्रीत जास _{के} reported Sunday. The weekly ILE DETAILER ET Link Stank C. reported that tests showed blood samples taken from grand a salar war Bobbie Ann Williams and her mile i manife 13-year-old son Danny did HISSHIP LEGIE match the president's DNA "There was no match. Not even close," the news mor in familie ich handol and magazine reported, citing a Charles College Co. source at the tabloid Star newspaper which authorised in asmit the tests. The report ends years of speculation over the affair -accounts of which first sur-1-made fires faced in U.S. tabloid newspaed to extinct pers in 1992

Senator calls impeachment 'pile of dung'

أن العالمية التراث المراث ا الله الدائلة المادي ويجو WASHINGTON (AFP) — in the state of the s some and in the January on Sunday called the House Sunday called the House move to impeach President Bill Clinton a "pile of dung." The Real Property Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa toki Fox television that the Senate's unanimous vote on Fiday to begin the impeachment trial later this week in no way legitimises the sham, parisan action taken by the hope to at the later this week. some dignity in handling this pile of dung, if I might use that phrase that a reckless, parti-

New clashes in Hebron over Israeli security clampdown

HEBRON (Agencies) — Hundreds of Palestinians protesting a week-long curfew on the Israeli-occupied sector of Hebron rained rocks and bottles Sunday on Israeli soldiers, who fired teargas and rubber-encased metal bullets in response, witnesses said.

No injuries were immediately reported.

Sporadic clashes have occurred almost daily in Hebron since the army imposed the curfew on the more than 20,000 Palestinians living in the Israeli-controlled sector on Jan. 4 following a shooting attack which wounded two Israeli women in the area.

The army also sealed off entrances to the 80 per cent of Hebron which was nimed over to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in January 1997.

Early Sunday Israel eased the closure on Palestinianruled Hebron by permitting around 6,000 workers and businessmen who have permits to enter Israel to leave the city, the army said.

A certain number of cargo trucks may also now travel between Hebron and the Gaza Strip, it said.

Despite the move, some 250 Palestinians waving Palestinian flags and por-traits of PNA President Yasser Arafat held a protest demonstration against the continuing curfew in the Israeli-ruled enclave and other army restrictions on the city.

The crowd approached the Israeli sector and threw stones and bottles at Israeli soldiers who responded by firing teargas, stun grenades and rubber-encased nietal



Sara Reschly, 26, from Mount Pleasant, Iowa, right, screams Sunday at Israeli border policemen, telling them not to shoot at Palestinian demunstrators during a march in the West Bank town of Hebron. Reschly and another member of a Chicago based human-rights organisation. Christian Peacemaker Teams, were detained fur interfering with the police (AP photo)

bullets, witnesses said.

During the confrontation, Ismeli troops arrested Canadian and U.S. members of a Christian pacifist group wbo tried to break up clashes between Palestinian stonethrowers and soldiers, witnesses said.

Members of the Christian Peacemaker Team tried to halt the violence by standing between Palestinian protesters and Israeli soldiers who were firing rubber-couted bullets at the metal stonethrowers, the witnesses

Soldiers arrested two of the foreigners, identified by another group member as U.S. national Sarah Reschly and Pierre Shamtz of Cana-

"They were trying to get the soldiers to stop shooting and the Palestinians to stop throwing stones," a member of the group said.

There was no immediate comment by the Israeli

Team has for several years maintained between five and 10 members in Hebron to promote non-violence between Palestinians and some 400 militant Jewish settlers living in the centre of the city of 140,000.

The latest trouble began Jan. 4 when unidentified gunnien opened fire on a fled into the Palestinian-run sector of the city.

gun. Under peace accords between Israel and the PNA, the anny withdrew from most of Hebron in January 1997 but remains in control of the final lifth of the city where the Jewish settlers live near the Tomb of the

van bringing senlers into the city, wounding two women. Israel says the attackers

Tensions jumped further on Wednesday after Israeli soldiers killed a mentallyhandicapped Palestinian man who approached an army patrol holding a toy

Pairiarchs, a site holy to both Jews and Muslims.

determine Israel's borders — Netanyahu TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Netanyahu took a hard-line Egypt of 'meddling' Sunday on Palestinian statehood, telling his cabinet that the Palestinians will not be

Palestinians won't

allowed to determine Israel's

A senior Palestinian official, meanwhile, insisted Palestinians would achieve an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital --something Israel has vowed never to allow,

In recent months, Palestinian plans to declare statehood have been a major point of contention. The Palestinians have said they have the right to declare a state in May whether or not terms have been negotiated with Israel.

Israel has called that stance irresponsible and dangerous and demanded that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat stop talking about any unilateral statehood declaration.

Palestinians have recently toned down statehood talk, fearing that resulting Israeli security jitters would give a boost to Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahti in May 17 elections.

Netanyahu reiterated his hard-line views at Sunday's cabinet meeting.

'We will not allow Arafat and the Palestinians to determine the borders of our state and the future of our capital." he sold his ministers. according to a statement released afterward.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah, Palestinian Parliament Speaker Ahmad Qoureia, also known as Abu Ala, blasted what he called Netanyahu's "arrogance and foolishness."

"We are ready and able to continue the struggle until our national rights are recognised - our independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as our capital," he told lawmakers.

Netanyahu accuses

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu accused Egypt Sunday of "meddling" in Israel's domestic affairs by pressing the Palestinians to hold off any unilateral declaration of independence until after Israeli elections in

During a cabinet meeting Sunday morning and in later remarks to journalists, Netanyahu said "certain circles in Egypt" were urging Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to hold off a planned declaration of statehood in hopes a more friendly government will emerge from the May 17 polls.

These circles may hope for a change of government in Israel, on the assumption that Arafat will then be able to create a Palestinian state and divide Jerusalem without any serious Israeli opposition," Netanyahu told his ministers according to official minutes of the cabinet session.

In later remarks to journalists, Netanyahu accused Egypt of "meddling in Israel's domestic affairs," and said, "it is important for the Israeli public to be aware of these intentions."

Netanyahu reiterated that the current right-wing government under his leadership would respond severely if Arafat carried out his declared intention to declare a state with Arab east Jerusalem as its capital.

"Israel reserves the right to extend Israeli law to the territories under its cootrol if Arafat and the Palestinians violate the agreements they have signed and unilaterally declare the establishment of a Palestinian state," he said,

Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Shimon Peres said Arafat had expressed willingness to put off plans to declare statehood if peace talks resume. Arafat aides refused to confirm or deny

Peres told Israel's Channel Two in an interview aired Sunday that Arafat told him that if peace talks were renewed between the sides. "there would be no need for unilateral declarations" of

statehood. One right-wing candidate for prime minister, lawnuker Üzi Landatı, said Palestinians would defer declaring statehood in order to help leftist candidates in the election.

"It's a fact that if they delayed it, it would be in the interest of helping the (opposition] Labour party," Lan-

dau told army radio. The increasingly bitter

statehood debate conies as the U.S.-brokered Wve River peace accords, signed in October, continue to founder, Israel called off a promised troop withdrawal last month, citing what it said were Palestinian violutions of the accord. The Palestinians deny violating the agreement, and say they will not meet new terms set by Israel.

U.S. mediator Dennis Ross was due in the region on Monday to try to help get the accord back on track.

Although Israel's troop withdrawals from the West Bank have been put on hold. the director of Israel's finance ministry, Ben-Tsion Zilberfarb, travelled to Washington Sunday request \$1.2 million in aid that the U.S. pledged to Israel to cover costs in the implementation of the peace accord, his office said.

Japanese FM vows more aid to PNA, presses Israel on pullbacks

RAMALLAH (AFP) ---Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura offered the Palestinian National Authority another \$20 million in aid Sunday and vowed continued support until the Palestinians realise their "hopes and nights" for selfdetermination.

In a meeting with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and a later speech to the legislature, Palestinian Koumura also promised to press Israeli leaders to end their suspension of the recent Wye River peace accord, which requires further Israeli pullbacks from the West

"In my meetings tomorrow, I will sincerely ask Israeli leaders to implement existing agreements. Koumura told the Palestinian deputies of his planned talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

"The Japanese government and people, standing on the people's side, will continue to provide our utmost moral and economic support to realise the hopes and rights of the Palestinian people," he

During Koumura's meeting with Arafal, the Japanese and Palestinians signed an agreement providing for \$20 million in Japanese aid for infrastructure work at the new Gaza airport and other transit points into the Gaza Strip.

Since the Palestinian National Authority was created in 1994 to govern autonomous zones in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, Japan has given \$400 million to the self-rule administration and Koumura said it would give another \$200 million over the next two years.

West Bank earlier Sunday after visits to Egypt. Lebanon, Syria and Jordan and oversaw the inauguration of a new hospital built with Japanese aid in the Palestinian enclave of Jericho.

While Koumura spoke out strongly in favor of Palestinian "self-determination." he shied away from questions about whether Arafat should go ahead with his declared intention of inilaterally declaring independence if negotiations with Israel remain stalled.

Israel attacks infrastructure in Lebanon

RASHAYA (AFP) — Israeli artillery fire rocked several regions of Lebanon on Sunday, damaging infrastructure facilities as well as four houses and two cars,

Lebanese police said. Some 40 shells fell on the region, they said, cutting a major power line that supplies electricity to the eastern Bekan valley as well as the majority of villages in the Israeli-occupied "security

zone" in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate word of any casualties.

Police said that in Zellaya, along the border of the easiem part of the zone, drinking-water pipelines were damaged along with three houses.

Further west the Israeli shelling damaged two cars in Nabatiyeh as well as a house in the town of Arabsalim. Israel threatened to bom-

bard Lebanon's infrastructure in response to attacks by the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah militia on Israeli targets in the zone and northern Israel.

Lebanon on Saturday filed a complaint with the international committee monitoring a truce in southem Lebanon after an Israeli attack Friday damaged electrical cables near the Bisri Bridge outside of Sidon.

Iraq's parliament slams 'unfair' U.N. resolutions

BAGHDAD (AP) -- After two days of bellicose threats, the fraqi parliament on Sunday adopted a vaguely-worded statement on the latest spat with the United Nations.

Legislators in debate Saturday and earlier Sunday had called on the government to rescind its 1994 recognition of neighbouring Kuwait and to stop honouring all U.N. resolutions related

But the statement adopted by parliament merely called for further discussion "of unfair resolutions and measures which contravene international law and the U.N. charter."

It also urged that the Iraqi government adopt necessary stands and measures" reflecting the will of the Iragi people.

And it said Iraq "holds the Saudi and Kuwaio regimes fully responsible for the U.S. and British aggression on Iraq" and reserves the right to seek compensation.

U.S. and British forces launched missile and rocket attacks on Iraq Dec. 16-19 to punish it for failing to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors. Most U.S. forces in the region are aboard ships in the Gulf, but the United States also maintains bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Despite objections raised by several legislators that the statement did not spell out clearly what the members had demanded, Suadoun Hummadi, speaker of the National Assembly suspended discussions and called for a vote. The statement was passed by a majori-

Afterwards, legislators from the parliament - gave a variety of interpretations of what the statement actually meant. Hummadi declined to discuss it with reporters.

The statement passed Sunday was far different from a draft circulated on Saturday, which had called for reversing Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and urged the government to press ahead with its defiance of the U.S.-imposed "no-fly" zones.

Iraq recognised Kuwait's sovereignty and borders in November 1994 -after a standoff with U.S. forces - as had been mandated by a U.N. resolu-

The U.N. Security Council passed a series of resolutions concerning Iraq Egypt urges Iraq to change attitude

CAIRO (AFP) - Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa Sunday called on Irou to "change its tone" in dealing with Egypt and other Arab countries, in the latest round of a mounting war of words between Baghdad and Cairo. "The Arabs must be as dear to the Iraqis as Iraq and the Iraqis are to the Arabs."

he told journalists." We call upon our brothers in Iraq to cooperate with their Arab His call for Iraq to change its attitude came after members of the Iraqi parlia-

ment meeting on Saturday blamed Kuwait and Saudi Arabia for December's four days of U.S.-British air strikes against fraq.

Musa regretted the Iraqi parliament's decision describing it as the result of "anger and frustration." "In spite of that, we must all work to alleviate the sufferings of the fraqi people," he said.

after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. which sparked the 1991 Gulf war. Iraq has been trying to get the international body to lift the trade sanc-

tions, imposed in 1990, that severely

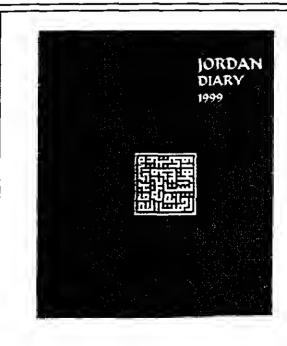
restrict its sale of oil and other financial dealings. The no-fly zones were imposed by the United States and its allies after the Gulf war to protect Iraqi Kurds and

Shiite Muslims. There have been at least four incidents in the zones involving U.S. and British patrol jets since the midDecember bombings.

One legislator after another on Sunday urged the Iraqi leadership to end all cooperation with the United Nations

and annul its recognition of Kuwait. "I demand the annulment of all the related resolutions passed by the Security Council, including the recognition of Kuwait and its new borders," said Hayfa Mohammad.

Sunday's parliament statement made no mention of the U.N. Special Commission, which oversees the search for Irag's weapons of mass destruction.



Produced by the International Press Office of the Royal Hashemite Court

Now available at bookshops in Amman, Aqaba and Petra

Sixty-six deputies seek time on House floor to air concerns about 1999 budget proposal

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday resumed its debate of the Kingdom's 1999 fiscal budget, with many deputies demanding that the government consider the Finance Committee's report and recommendations concerning social and economic

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Deputy Sidki Shabatat was the first to address the House in its second day of debate. Shabatat urged the government to implement the Finance Committee's recommendations, especially those focused on poverty through supporting the National Aid and the Employment and Developinent Funds. The two foundations have the potential to finance income-generating proiects that employ Jordanian workers, he said.

At the session, attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and the Council of Ministers, the deputy nointed out that the lands

in the southeastern regions within the Disi water basin and Rum are no longer exploited for grain production because the government has refused to purchase the produce at subsidised prices to encourage investors to increase their

output. Shabatat called on the government to overcome Israeli obstacles to Jordan's trade with exports to the Palestinian self-rule

Deputy Mohammad Bataineh criticised the 10year IMF-led economic restructuring programme for failing to meet its tar-

He said that one reason for the failure was the imposition of the sales tax and the high interest rates on borrowing. Bataineh said the rates barm smallsize industrial projects, contribute to capital flight and reduced the amounts of investments.

The deputy added that a combination of reduced investments \mathbf{and}

increase in taxes further aggravated the country's economic recession and consequently, has led to increased unemployment and poverty.

Deputy Ghazi Al Fayez called on the government to reconsider its investment policy and to extend more aid to the poor dis-tricts and needy families. The Central Bedouins deputy demanded that the government rescind a recent decision to collect 250 fils for each cubic

metre of water consumed

for agricultural purposes.
Deputy Mifleh Ruheimi urged the government to increase the salaries of the military and civil servants to help them meet the sky-rockeding cost of living. He also demanded that the government retain its subsidy of basic foodstuffs sold to needy families.

Deputy Nayef Moula pointed out that Israeli obstacles blocking Jordanian exports to the Palestinian territories, as well as the semi-closure of the Iraqi markets, brought a drop in revenues and an increase in expenses, deeply hurting the national

Deputy Mohammad Abu Hdeib called for supporting measures taken by the Ministry of Tourism to boost tourism and for expanding the services of the health centres.

Deputy Adnan Agrabawi said nothing in the 1999 budget, presented to the Parliament last month by of Finance Marto, gives Michael cause for optimism or satisfaction. Through the budget the

government promises the Jordanian improved conditions, said Aqrabawi, but poverty is worsening noticeably and the rate of unemployment is increasing.
A total of 66 deputies

have requested opportunities to deliver speeches during the current debate of the state's budget. The debute is expected to lust

New electricity sector appointments in the works to shore up restructuring

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN - The government is expected to announce the appointments Of three directors for the recently-formed power distribution, generation and transmission companies in its drive to restructure the energy sector, officials said Sunday.

According to the sources. Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Qusai Quieishat is tipped to be appointed as director of the new power distribution firm while Chairman of the Board of Arab Potash Company Ali Nsour will assume the reigns of the power generation company. Minster of Water and Energy Hani Mulki will be the president of the transmission, sources

officials. requested anonymity, neither gave further details nor a date for the formal announcement of the appointments.

In December, Mulki said the comminee in charge of privatising the electricity sector completed necessary measures to restructure the sector, and registered the entities with the Companies Comptroller at the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Mulki added that the new companies would begin operating independently as of Jan. 1, 1999, and that the government will conduct financial feasibility studies on power distribution and generation to allow the private sector's participation in the two companies. The transmission entity will remain in government

According to Mulki, amendments to the 1996 Electricity Law, in line with the government policy to restructure the sector, are

currently under way and expected to be issued soon. The proposed law includes provisions for the establishment of an electricity regulatory body to determine the cost and sale

of power, he added.

Last November, eight international firms attended a pre-bid conference to build the first private independent power plant in Jordan to meet an expected rise in the country's electricity consumption between the years 2002-2006.

The government is shopping for qualified companies to build a 300-450 megawatt power plant in Samra near Zaraq, on a build-own-operate basis at an estimated cost of \$300-400 million, depending on the size of the plant. Bidding will close on Jan. 23.

The current generation capacity of the National Electricity Power Company

With the expansion of the Agaba Thermal Power Station, due to be completed this year power generation will increase to 1,361mw.

Jordan can also tap into electricity through the regional power grid. The first phase of a five-nation regional power grid linking the Kingdom, Egypt. Iraq. Syria and Turkey was inaugurated last month with the opening of the Cairo-Amman grid.

However, the country needs an additional 100mw annually beginning the year 2002. Companies will be asked to submit two bids. one for a combined cycle plant based on diesel or gas, depending on availability. and the other for a steam cycle plant, which will use heavy fuel oil — a less environment-triendly option because of high sul-

phur content.

France to push to revive family reunification programme

By Lima Nabil

AMMAN - France has embarked on a comprehensive offensive to revive its refugee family reunion programme, a tenant of the multilateral track of the Middle East peace process. The process bas been dormant for the past three

Gompertz, Stephane deputy director of the Middle East Department at the French Ministry of Foreign made announcement Sunday and said that Paris was preparing for a conference on the Palestinian refugees problem at the Red Sea resort of Sharin al Sheikh in Egypt

by the end of January. Gompertz, who visited Jurdan during a Middle East tour that also includes

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan

will celebrate Arbor Day on

January 15 with a tree-

planting ceremony hosted

under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown

Prince Hassan, the Regent,

at the site of the complex of

the Ministry of Agriculture

on the Airport Road, Minis-

ter of Agriculture Mijhem

The minister said the

Crown Prince will lay the

foundation stone of the min-

Khreisha said that at the

istry's new building.

Khreisha said.

also Egypt, Palestine and Israel, noted in an interview with the Jordan Times that no progress has been achieved so far in implementing the family reunion programme because of the deadlock in the Middle East peace process itself.

He said France is concemed about this humanitarian issue which has remained unsolved due to political obstacles created by Israel

However, Gompenz said a French-backed committee working on the revival of the programme bas succeeded in securing the reunion of between 10.000 and 15,000 families since the initiation of the peace process at the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991. Gompertz said the com-

mittee will pursue its

equipment and agricultural

The minister added that it

is boped that this annual

event will mobilise Jordani-

ans to plant trees as a

"greening" the Kingdom in

accordance with His

Majesty King Hussein's call

for "a green Jordan by the

"Planting trees and further

forestation is a collective

national task and a responsi-

bility every Jordanian

sbould shoulder."

national

year 2000."

duty towards

produce will be on display.

Arbour Day celebrations planned

endeavours, and France will continue to back its work until the world community finds an equitable solution to the refugees problem.

The committee began implementing the family reunion at the rate of only 2,000 families annually because of Israel's refusal to increase the quota, said Gompertz, who noted that most returnees went to the Gaza Strip after Israel posed difficulties to those who tried to return to settle in the West Bank. He added that France is still trying to increase the quota.

The past three years have witnessed a series of informal meetings to discuss this issue, but the concerned parties - Egypt. Jordan, Palestine, Israel, France, Canada and Norway - are hoping to hold a formal neeting in Egypt later this month to discuss the problem, said Cons-

Syria and Lebanon, two countries also tied to the refugees question, have so far boycotted the multilateral phase of He pointed out that prior-

ity is given to cases of a humanitarian nature, noting that the committee processes thousands of applications for reunion before referring their cases to the Israeli authorities which studies the applications. He said Palestinian families initiate the reunification process by submitting requests for reunion procedures. It then takes

Municipality may contest Alo! and JPP fee exemption granted by Cabinet

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — The Ammun Municipality is studying the possibility of contesting the legality of a three-year old Cabinet decision to exempt Jordan's two public phone companies from paying fees for occupying public space, an official said Sunday.

After an exclusive Study of the Council of ministers decision, taken in 1996, the legal department at the municipality concluded that the the Cabinet does not have the right to issue such an exemption.

"According municipality's internal regulations, the Council of Ministers does not have the right to issue such an exemption," said Mohammad Subehi, head of the Legal Department at the municipality.
According to the law,

the municipality has the right apply charges retroactively to Jordan Public Phone Pay Ser-vices Company (JPP) and Jordan for Trans Telecommunications

(Alo!) for installing public phones on stateowned property without regards to the exemption earlier offered by the Cahinet.

Such a contestation

must be made at the Higher Court of Justice. One Lower House deputy called on the government to explain the legal basis on which the exemption was originally

granted. "How is it that privately-run companies were exempt from paying fees for using public land?" asked Deputy Nazih Ammari. "People do noi have the right to use state land without paying for

According to Ammari, the two companies occupy around 3,000 square metres of public land. The Amman Munici-

pality annually charges JD50 for the use of one square metre. Each phone booth covers an area of one square metre. However, the financial

director of Alo!, Ahmud Dawleh, told the Jordan Times that his company will have to increase the prices of its service if Amman Municipality charges it for occupying public property. JPP officials declined to comment on the issue.

Alo! established in 1997, has 2,586 phones installed across the Kingdom, and hopes to have 7.000 phone booths by the end of 1999.

State Security Court sentences weapons smugglers with five to ten years labour

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN - The State Security Court has sentenced seven people of different Arah nationalities to prison terms ranging from five to ten years in prison with hard lubour after convicting them of illegally exporting and importing weapons from Iraq to Jordan and neighbouring countries. The same court acquitted three other defendants of the same charges.

The seven are among 20 defendants, of whom six are being tried in absentia, who were standing trial at the State Court on charges of exporting and importing illegal weapons including machine guns, small rocket launchers, guns and ammu-

A court tribunal also decided in its Jan. 6 ruling not to try four of the 20 defendants stating that "it was not within its jurisdiction.

All 14 defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges during the trial opening in

The defendants were: Salah A., 43, Egyptian. (five years), Sa'ed Nasser, 33, Iraqi, (six years), Juma'a Jabar, 32, Iraqi, Jassem Kate', 28, Iraqi, Ibrahim Musa, 43, Jordanian, Khalil Musa, 29, Jordanian, and Karim Jabar, Iraqi, were each sentenced to seven and a half years in

The three acquined by the military court were Taleb Mahmoud, 47, Riyad Mahmoud, 42, and Mahmoud Ibrahim, 36, all of whom are Jordanian.

According to court documents, the first two defendants who resided in Iraq. decided in February 1998 to smuggle weapons to Jordan via the trucks and buses that were coming to Jordan from Iraq. The group would then sell

the weapons in the Jordanian market or smuggle them to the West Bank. The two then recruite

the rest of the defendants in Iraq and Jordan to help them in the smuggling and selling operations, the court papers said.

The charge sheet said that the defendants smuggled over 300 machine guns, five small rocker launchers, over 200 guns and a large quantity of ammunitions that were sold for the amount of JD65,540, the charge sheet said.

The group were arrested while attempting to sell some of the weapons to undercover agents.

The authorities received a tip in April about their illegal activities.

The verdicts will automatically be review by the Court of Cassation within

Khriesba. "We are looking agricultural News in Brief

Royal Family attends, hosts iftar

AMMAN (Petral — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, hosted an Iftar banquet Sunday at the Sports City for senior Armed Forces officers, Public Security Department, General Intelligence Department and Civil Defence Department. Prince Hassan and the audience performed the Maghreb prayers. Meanwhile, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday paricipated in an Istar banquer hosted by the Greater Amman Municipality for the Um Al Hussein Orphanage marking His Majesty King Hussein's recovery. During the event, Princess Basma praised the orphanage for its efforts. The Princess distributed gifts and clothes to the orphanage's children.

Mamser visits Jerash

JERASH (Petra) — The government announced that it has provided JD1 million to the needy, orphans and handicapped around the Kingdom since the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan. During an inspection visit to Jerash governorate, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Kheir Mamser said another JD250,000 were provided by other local, Arab and Islamic organisations, distributed 40 items of in-kind assistance to underprivileged families in Jerash. Jerash Governor Ahmad Lawzi briefed the minister on the recent development in social activities there.

Cancer foundation meets

AMMAN (J.T.) - The Jordan Amal Cancer Foundation's Board of Trustees Sunday amended its internal regulations, and approved the legislative and finance committees. The board also appointed Abdullah Khatib as its rapporteur.

forward to sceing every Jordanian voluntarily taking part in planting trees and saplings.

He added that the ministry is calling on the Armed Forces and other public institutions to get out their shovels to support the effort. and that the forest near the new building will be named after Jordanian martyrs.

Khreisha said the ministry has an annual plan to plant an 20,000-dunum area with forest trees.

The country's total cultivated area now stands at 1.320 million dunums, constituting less than one per cent of the overall area of the Kingdom. Director of the Range and

roughly 13 months to

process the application.

Forestation Department Musa Abbadi said that at least eight million tree saplings have been produced for this year's agricultural season, half of which will be planted in the range, forestation areas, and pasture lands while the rest will be distributed free of charge to various organisa-

tions, farmers, and individu-

WHAT'S GOING ON

Special Programme Special CNN programme on honour crimes in Jordan at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (local time).

"Le Bossu" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weib-"Legends of the Fall" at Books@Café, Jabal Amnian

Poetry Recital Poetry recital with the participation of several poets at the City Hall, Greater Amman Municipality, Ras Al 'Ain at 7:30 p.m.

on Tuesday Jan. 12 at 8:30 p.m. (Tel. 4650457).

Lecture

"The Nymphaem" by Ms. Chan Tray at the Friends of Archaeology on Monday Jan. 11 at 7:30 p.ni. (Telefax 5930682). (The lecture will discuss whether the Roman Nymphaem was due to the existence of the water channels or was it just a gymnasium for the elite).

Exhibitions

Exhibition of ceramics, sculpture, and abstract (plastic) art by Jordanian, Iraqi, Syrian, Lebanese, and Sudanese artists at Hammourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5536098), until Jan. 25. Exhibition of Nabataean silver jewellery at the Jordan

Design and Trade Centre, off Wadi Sagra Street, until Jan. 15 (Tel. 5699141/2). The Warm Winter" -- works by several artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until Feb. 1 The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of Contemporary Arab Artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel.

4643251/2, until Jan. 28.

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN - The Jordan Pharmacists Association is scheduled to send a long overdue shipment of medicine to Iraq after the Eid Al Fitr, Abdul Rahim Issa, head of the association said Sunday.

of Presidents of the Union of Professional Associations decided in a meeting held late Saturday to send the shipment after obtaining a government approval. expected to be released before the Eid Al Fitr that will begin either next Sunday or Monday.

The 13-member Council

The association, whose members own 1,600 pharmacies and 12 drug factories, will be sending the shipment in defiance of U.N.-imposed economic sanctions on Iraq It was scheduled to send the first shipment two weeks ago but the association was surprised by the government's delay in giving the go ahead.

In its trip, the association will offer a donation to help

rebuild the Faculty of Pharmacy at Bughdad University which was destroyed by the American-led air strikes against the country last month.

Pharmacists expect government approval

of Iraq-bound medicine before 'Eid Al Fitr

Iraq is now refusing to accept humanitarian aid, and instead is demanding that eight-year-old economic sanctions be lifted. The 100,000 member-

strong professional associations will request that the traqi government exempt them from the decision and accept the donations. The influential professional associations are currently in contact with different Arah professional associations in the region to prepare for an Arab professional association conference. The conference is expected to discuss the possibilities of collectively violating the sanctions that have devastated the fraqi economy and created an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in that country, especially among children.

The conference venue is yet to be announced but Amman, Damascus, Cairo and Baghdad are all being

reviewed as potential hosts. In an earlier interview with the Jordan Times, Issa said that the shipment of medical supplies had been held up for technical rea-

"The products to be exported to Iraq originally were designated for Jordanian markets, which requires that the association obtain a special permit from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Interior to

export it to Iraq," Issa said. But an informed source at the Ministry of Industry and Trade said the ministry has not received any request from the association. The source added that sending medicine to Iraq is not considered a violation to the U.N. sanctions. United Nations sanctions imposed on lrag after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait ban it from importing or

exporting most goods. Humanitarian items such as food and medicine are allowed in, but every sale has to be approved by a U.N. sanctions monitoring

committee. The pharmacists association will not wait for approval from the United Nations, Issa said.

"If they will not allow us in, the trucks will turn back to Amman," said Issa.

Drug stores, pharmaceuúcul fuctories and medical equipment stores have responded positively to the campaign, said Issa. He could not disclose the exact aniount to be sent to Iraq. but said they would be sold on the Iraqi market at lower than market prices.

The associations earlier last month began a boycott of American and British drugs, medical equipment and other goods to protest against the air strikes on Iraq from Dec. 16 to Dec.

Some association members scomed the boycott decision and described it as impractical since the Jordanian market can not manage without the American and British products and that such a boycott was earlier launched but failed for the same reason.

Nigeria takes step towards democracy with state elections

LAGOS. Nigeria (AP) — who succeeded Abacha, has Abacha; and the Alliance for After decades of military rule. Nigeria continued its tentative stride towards democracy with long lines of voters turning out to elect governors and state assem-blies across the country.

Turnout appeared to particularly high in the north and in Lagos, before voting ended in mid-afternoon. Results were expected later Sunday.

In a novel anti-fraud move. voters were allowed to stay at polling centres after they cast their ballots and watch votes being counted.

Military meddling and armed forces coups have long been part of Nigerian politics - the army has held power for all but 10 years since independence in 1960. But change has come to Africa's most populous nation since Gen. Sani Abacha's sudden death in June ended his brutal dictatorship.

Landslides caused by heavy

Indonesian towns Friday.

killing seven people as the

death toll in an earlier slide

in the resort island of Bali

rose to 34, reports and an

In the West Java district of

Garut, some 160 kilometres

southeast of here, rescuers

discovered six bodies

trapped under the rubble

from a rain-weakened cliff

which toppled onto a main

road late Friday, the Kompas

Two more people were believed to still be trapped.

while three survivors were in

critical condition, Kompas

said. In East Java another

official said Sunday.

hit two more

Landslides toll

freed political prisoners, opened up the political process and repeatedly vowed to hand over power to civilians later this year. Nigeria, which became an international pariah under Abacha for its miserable human rights record, is again welcoming foreign envoys

and wooing investors. "We basically have one reason for voting, that is to get the military out of power. said Rahimi Sodunke, a Lagos husinessman.

We deserve a change in this country and we must shift power." Only three parties earned enough votes in local elections in December to qualify for the state polling, and for presidential voting next month.

The three parties are the Peoples' Democratic Party of former military ruler Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo; the All Abdulsalami Peoples Party, led by many Ahubakar, the career soldier supporters of late dictator

in Indonesia reaches 41

east of here, a woman was

found dead after a mountain-

side food stall was swept

away. Four others were

Meanwhile in Bali, rescue

efforts to find the remaining

six bodies believed buried

under the mud of a massive

slide Thursday, were inter-

rupted by rains which threat-

ened to bring down more

landslides on scores of

But the rescuers, in

Pupuan village in Tegalalang

district, pulled out two more

bodies early Sunday bring-

ing the death toll to 34, a

local duty police officer said.

8:00 am (0100 GMT), and a

woman was found at 10 a.m.

'One man was found at

searchers, officials said.

injured, Kompas added.

Democracy, mainly composed of opposition politicians from the Yoruba ethnic group from Nigeria's south-

Voting was held in 35 of Nigeria's 36 states. The elecnons did not take place in oilrich Bayelsa state, which has been the scene of growing violence by members of the ljaw tribe, who are demanding a bigger share of oil resources pumped from their poverty-stricken region.

Nigeria's electoral commission has said it would not conduct elections in that state because of fears of endangering its officials.

Despite the political shift since Abacha's death, Nigeria remains mired in poverty. The world's sixth-largest oil producer, the Nigerian economy has been crippled by years of mismanagement and

people found is now 34."

Sergeant Major Wayan

Lasto of Tegalalang office

He added that the rescue

search for the remaining six

more bodies believed to have

been trapped under the land-

Bali

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told AFP by phone.

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Cambodia hints at freedom for rights workers

Cambodia's Interior Ministry said Sunday it had asked a provincial court to speed up investigations into two detained human rights workers and to free them if there was no evidence.

"We don't want to keep them in jail." said interior ministry spokesman Khieu Sopheak. "But it depends on the investigation of the investigating

judge.
"This case has caused a about lot of concern about human rights.

We have proposed to the court to investigate this as soon as possible. If it is found they were not involved they will be

released. Kim Sen and Meas Minear of local rights group Licadho were arrested on Dec. 21 in the port southern Sihanoukville during protests against toxic

waste dumping by a

They were charged with robbery and criminal damage hut human rights groups said they were

Taiwanese firm.

only carrying out their normal protest monitoring duties and called for their immediate and unconditional release. The case bas attracted

international attention because of its sbarp contrast with the friendly treatment the government accorded to Samphan and Nuon Chea, two defecting leaders of the Khmer Rouge, whose revolution in the 1970s killed an estimated 1.7 million Cambodians.

In an extraordinary juxtaposition over New Year. while the rights workers sat jailed and denied bail in Sihanoukville. Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea visited the nearhy beach and berated journalists for not allowing them to

The two Khmer Rouge

leader were allowed last week to return to the protection of an area controlled hy their ex-comrades and the rights workers left to face up to six months in jail before being brought to trial and a sentence of up to 10years if convicted on both charges.

Saturday, Hammarberg, the head of the United Nations human rights office in Cambodia, said he had not been convinced that there was any evidence against the workers.

He said the case "gives a very sad signal about the respect of the authorities towards buman rights work."

The two men have been declared prisoners of conscience buman London-based rights group International.

Voice recorder from Thai crash 'inaudible'

BANGKOK (AFP) — The black box voice recorder pulled from the charred wreckage of a Thai Airways plane which crashed last month killing 101 people is barely audible, reports quoting accident investigators said Sunday.

slide had again been tem-Investigators into the porarily halted due to the crash on Dec. 11 now hope the black box data recorder cannot search for is in better shape and can them because the rain is realprovide vital clues to the last moments of the landslide doomed flight. Bangkok's occurred around 9:00 a.m. Sunday Nation newspaper Thursday in the mountainreported.

ous area of Tegalalang, 55 The two black boxes were taken to the United Denpasar, as villagers were States for decoding after working to clear an irrigathe crash of the A310-200 tion channel. Thursday which plunged into a police said they feared 50 swamp in southern Surat Thani province as it tried

The voice box was opened with care, but it produced a barely audible

recording," said Air Vice

Mahadthai. of the direc-

Marshall

torate of air inspection. A procedure to open and decode the data recorder was under way, he said.

The investigation is trying to find out if the disaster was caused by pilot error, inaccurate landing information supplied by the control tower, a sudden change in weather conditions or mechanical fail-

Some of the 45 people who survived the tragedy have criticised the pilot. who died in the crash, for trying to land after abortapproaches because of poor visibility.

Since the crasb, it has been disclosed that the Landing Instrument System (ILS) at Surat Thani was not functioning due to work on a runway.

However, airport officials said other navigational aids were sufficient and it was up to the pilot to decide whether conditions were safe enough to land.

Officials from Thailand's aviation department, the Royal Thai Air Force, Thai Airways International and Airbus Industrie joined the investigation in the United States.

Thailand's Investigation Committee has opened an inquiry into

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N.'s Annan decries beating of Kenyan ecologist

UNITED NATIONS (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan protested Saturday against the beating of a Kenyan environmentalist who is a member of his advisory board on disarmament. He said in a statement that he expected Kenyan authorities to take "appropriate action" against. those responsible for anacking Wangari Maathai, who was beaten and whipped hy private security guards during a demonstration Friday against the sale of forest land near Nairobi, the capital. "The secretary-general has learned with concern that Professor Wangari Maathai, a member of his advisory board on disarmament manters and coordinator of the Green Belt Movement, was bospitalised after being the subject of violence," a statement from his office said. Three opposition members of parliament and two German environmentalists were also among those roughed up at the Karura forest site, north of Nairobiwhen 70 guards moved in armed with machetes, clubs. whips, bows and arrows. The protesters say senior government officials have allowed the illegal seizure of 80 bectares of public land for private development. Annan, in his statement, wished Maathai a speedy recovery and said he had "no doubt that the Kenya authorities will take appropriate action against the perpetrators of this attack on a leading national and international figure in the disarmament and environmental field." Environmentalists and national newspapers have taken up the case, calling it an example of official corruption. Trouble flared after Maathai and two members of parliament led a group of activists in an attempt to plant a tree outside a fenced-off section of the forest. The security guards beat and stoned demonstrators and smashed the windows of cars belonging to protesters and journalists. Police declined to com-

Church of England may loosen state ties

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LONDON (UPI) - The Sunday Times of London is reporting that senior clerics in the Church of England have held a secret meeting with leaders of other Christian churches to discuss removing its ties to the British state. The meeting, first reported Sunday, was held with the Archbishop of Canterbury's support on Nov. 30. Removing the church's ties to the state could eventually involve dropping the British monarch as its supreme governor and forging closer ties with other Protestant denommations. The Church of England was formed in 1533. when King Henry VIII split with the Roman Catholic Church because it refused to annul his first marriage Since then, the British monarch has been the church's supreme governor. The church's bishops also have seats inparliament's House of Lords, The church's official price tion still holds that it will not abandon its historic role, but until now discussion of disestablishment floated only on the fringes. Disestablishment may become more attractive for the church in the wake of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's rejection of the church's nominees for the bishopric of Liverpool and his plans to reform the House of Lords. Blair's reform plan for the House of Lords could cause many bishops to lose their seats. Some clerics fear the church's established status could be a sticking point inits efforts to build closer ties with other Protestant denominations, especially Methodists, who oppose the influence in the church's affairs.

No prosecutions over Diana's death; says paper

LONDON (R) - An official investigation into the Paris car crash which killed Britain's Princess Diana and her companion Dodi Al Fayed has concluded that no one left alive is to blame, the Sunday Mirror said. The investigation, led by French judge Hervé Stéphan, began soon after Diana's death in Sept. 1997 and was completed last week, the newspaper said. It said it had obtained key segments of the report despite the strict security that surrounded it. The Sunday Mirror said that according to those excerpts the only person who could have been held responsible - the car driver Henri Paul -- was dead. "From the overall examination ofthe known factors the accident may be due to excess speed, the peculiar characteristics of the road, the presence of a Fiat Uno at the mouth of the tunnel and the poor control of the vehicle by the driver," the newspaper quoted the report as saying. The Paris investigators have consistently blamed the crash on the high speed at which Paul drove the car and the criminal level of alcohol in his blood at the time of the accident. The Sunday Mirror said manslaughter charges against photographers and a dispatch rider who pursued the car after it left the Ritz Hotel, owned by Dodi's father Mohamed Al Fayed, would be dropped. Photographers who were first to reach the crash scene would face only minor charges, the newspaper said, and the managers of the Ritz Hotel would not be tried for corporate manslaughter. The owners of the limousine hire company which provided the car would not face any charges for not providing a driver for the car when it was requested, the Sunday Mirror said. Only Diana's bodyguard, Trevor Rees-Jones, survived the crish but he suffered severe injuries.

Suharto's old party starts offensive for Indonesian elections

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia's ruling Golkar Party, for decades the main political vehicle of fallen president Subaro. has set up a 480-strong team to launch its bid to hang on the power in the June 7 elections. The team, selected for their "loyalty and consistency" was installed by Golkar general chairman Akbar Tanjung at the party headquarters here Saturday in anticipation of a "strong challenge" in the poli-the state Antara News Agency said Sunday. "God willing Golkar will be able to win the hearts of the majority of the people and emerge victorious." Tanjung told the meeting of the central executive board. After winning every election in Indonesia since 1971, with massive backing from the military and the civil service, the 36-million-member Golkar has been trying since Suharto's fall in May to disassociate itself from the excesses of his rule. In its first post-Subarto congress November, Golkar removed Suharto from its board of patrons and booted his children and closest conies out of any positions on its board of directors. In June it will also face far more open field, with some 15 out of the 120 parties that have mushroomed since May expected to qualify for the poils promised by Suharto's hand picked successor, President B Habibie. Among its strongest challengers currently appear to be the Indonesian Democracy Party (PDI-Sunggle) Meganian Sulface and Sulface Megawati Sukamoputri, the politician daughter of the comtry's first president Sukarno. Also high in opinion polls of the National Awakening Party (PAN) headed by Missing intellectual Amien Rais. The June 7 polls will restrict the election of a new polling. election of a new parliament, or lower house and the contion of a new People's Consultative Assembly which would under Habibie's timetable select a new president before and of 1000

slip in Jember, some 800 km ... so the total number of had died in the slide. previous 1950s packaging shows changing consumer world

beside the washing powders in a supermarket and you'd he forgiven for feeling haffled.

ls it powder, liquid or tablets you are after? What does your choice of brand say about you? Do you want your kids to have a gleaming white sports kit or are you someone who simply chucks in the laundry and forgets it?

If the decision seems hard today, imagine what British housewives felt 50 years ago when the drah era of World War II rationing ended and American-style self-service stores and commercial TV burst across the Atlantic.

A new book shows how! consumer culture took off here in the 1950s with a cornucopia of brightly packaged convenience products - from automatic washing machines to Tupperware and filterripped cigarettes.

"Happy faces in the home. Why? Because it all seemed to be easy, bright and clean," says advertising and packaging historian Robert Opie "The Scrapbook".

Everyday objects in the book project the security. certainty and promise of an era when prime minister Harold MacMillan could say in 1957: "Most of our people have never had it so good".

Many brands Opie shows are part of the 1990s consumer landscape even if their roles in people's lives have changed.

"Oxo" soup cubes. given to British soldiers in World War I trenches,

breakfast cereals to offer a promotional toy with its Sunny Jim ragdoll, even "Plasticine" modelling clay. are top names today.

But "Twink" home permanent hair-dos, "Gaytime" choc ices and "Hillman" cars have long since become museum pieces.

"I think we accept change much more readily than we ever used to. We accept the world we're in and don't think much about what happened before," says Opie, who covered the 1930s and 1940s in earlier titles which make brands a barometre of

"The idea is to give a "Force", one of the first spread on household products to give an insight into how all this has happened," Opie told Reuters. These brands have

> become so much part of our lives, they are almost becoming part of our family." Fridges were a luxury. owned by just 30 per cent of homes in the 1950s, so new supermarkets dummy packs and moulded rubber meat. By contrast, goods in hrightly designed tins and boxes leapt off the

shelf. Opie recalled. "The 50s stand for the galvanisation of the American style, a new wave of attack-

ing the market, the mass enforcement of "money off" promotional ideas, in-store promotions and the vihrancy of packaging," he said.

a swirly feeling which

Opie enthuses about 1950s washing powder packs which combined art with function - Tide "with makes you feel it's going to work better" and Dreft "soft and buhhly suggesting it won't be harsh and ahra-

Making packaging speak for a brand is a serious affair today for detergent maker Lever Brothers. The Unilever unit in 1996 reduced by a quarter the number of packs it put onto supermarket fixtures, where it calculated shoppers spent an average of 13 seconds choosing a brand like Persil. "We looked at the value

the consumer attached to what we were offering through the hrand, whether functional or emotional, and how we were communicating that on the packaging." said corporate and consumer affairs director Jim

"We found we tried to put too many messages across," he said. Lever elevated to pride of place on the back of its Persil boxes a "consumer careline" which offers



If choosing a washing machine powder seems difficult in today's supermarkets, imagine what British housewives felt 50 years ago when the drab era of World War II rationing ended and American-style self-service stores and commercial TV burst across the Atlantic. Photo taken Jan. 8, 1999, as/HO/Pictures reproduced from 'The 1950's Scrapbook' published by New Cavendish Books, London (Reuters)

cleaning advice. Virginia Valentine, who analyses the cultural significance of communications, says Britain has attached greater meaning and virtue to brands in recent decades as traditional organised value systems of family and religion have waned.
"Culture abhors a vacu-

um and brands have rushed in to fill it," said

"Branding is not a postwar phenomenon. In a way there wasn't anything else. In those days brands were the signifier of a manufactured object. They were not the kind of icons of all our belief systems that they are now.

Persil today is the repository of all our cultural beliefs, not just about clothes and cleaning but the way we think about hringing up our children. There's an underlying notion which brands have fostered - that if your kids don't have pristine clothes you'll be accosted by social services."

in cultural assumptions can also be seen in attitudes to sweets, she observed. When sweets came off ration I can remember the way the shops were cleared in two hours. absolutely emptied." Britain ended wartime sugar restrictions in 1953. But now "we don't think about chocolate as a reward, something you can only have after you've earned it. The whole cocaholic thing

- egregious noshing, as opposed to a guilty secret - shows we've come to the end of the austerity paradigm."

NATO marks 50th anniversary

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation begins 10 celchrate its 50th anniversary Monday, kicking off a series of events including a football match, a military fashion parade, and a summit of leaders of the member states.

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The ceremooies will involve all of the countries in the alliance and most of the eastern and central European nations which are candidates to join or associated Partnership for Peace pro-

They will culminate in Washington on April 24 and 25, when heads of state and government gather in the same room where the North Atlantic Treaty was signed on April 4, 1949. The aim of the alliance

was to guard against a perceived threat from the Soviet Union and the other Communist-ruled countries under Moscow's dom-

That threat has now disappeared with the collapse of the Soviet system that began some ten years ago, and NATO is seeking a new role in international peace-

Monday NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene are to meet at a printing works in Belgium to see commemorative postage stamps roll

off the presses. Other events during the year will include the publiof books in Denmark. Greece, Italy. Hungary and Albania, a military fashion parade and a cycle rally in Bulgaria, a concert in Canada, a music festival in the Czech

Republic and the issue of commemorative telephone cards in Germany.

Greece also plans a film on its involvement in NATO, Britain and Poland will stage sports comesis between soldiers and schoolchildren, Denmark is to issue a special Trivial Pursuit-type general knowledge game on NATO.

in France, Luxembourg, Romania, Spain and Turkey conferences and lectures will be held, often specifie themes. Spain, for example, is to stage a debate in Valencia at the end of February on Mediterranean, involving

countries from the region. Solana will attend several of events during a planned tour of all member states during April for consultaiions ahead of Washington summit.

April 4 this year is Easter Sunday, a religious holiday in much of Europe, so NATO headquarters in Belgium will stage a military parade on April 8. keeping it relatively low key so as not to overshadow the summit.

Another parade in Washington will precede the opening of the summit. which will see the admission of first three eastern European members, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

The summit, which on its second day will be expanded to include 28 associated states, including the "old enemy" Russia, is expected confirm the trend to towards a "European identity" for NATO, which is still largely dominated by the United States.

Zinc important to brain function

LA JOLLA, Calif., (UPI) — Scientists have discovered why zinc is so important to proper brain function and why its deficiency appears linked to cognitive impairment.

The scientists report in Nature Structural Biology that zinc, long recognised as an essential trace element, is an integral part of structures called ion channels. These key "gate-keepers" regulate communication among

"We don't know yet what zinc is doing, but it is definitely a component in these essential structures," said senior study author Senyon Choe, assistant professor at The Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California.

"This finding was so surprising that at first we tried to disregard it, thinking it must be a contaminant, but, of course, as you try to disprove it, it keeps coming back."

The ion channels regulate how such ions as calcinm and potassium flow into and out of cells. Their flux is critical to vital neuronai processes. As calcium streams into hrain cells, it triggers changes that accompany learning.

Ming of the least Abnormalities potassium channels have been found in some epileptics and in 11-Suffation Res patients with insulin resistance and mobilileast will see ty disorders, said coesearcher Pffafinger of Baylor College of Medicine in

Houston. Using X-ray crystallography, the team analysed the structures of four potassium channels from the sea siug Aplysia. These channels — Shaw. Shab, Shal and Shaker - represent the four

classes of potassium channels found in all organisms, higher

including humans. They found all hut Shaker contained four zinc atoms in analogous positions, said co-Henry of the researcher Bellamy Stanford Synchroton Radiation Laboratory in Palo Alto, Calif.

"Each channel resembles a funnel, and the zinc elements ring the end that empties into the cell's interior." Choe said.

While neuroscientists have long known dyes that bind to zinc stain brain cells in unique patterns. indicating that zinc should have a role in brain function, the nature of that role has remained unclear.

Other studies have zinc can show n enbance learning in undernourished chil-

"Now we know zinc is embedded within structures that are absolutely critical for nerve cell activity." Choe. said

"Furthermore, amino acids that cradle the zinc atoms are completely conserved among the three classes of channels, telling us that during evolution there has been selective pressure to keep that zinc in

place. studies of Aplysia have implications for the human brain because all four kinds of potassium analysed channels have analogs in the human nervous system, said first study author Kathryn Bixby, now at the University

of California, San The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the American Heart Association.



Malaysia's newly appointed deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi kisses his mother Kalian Hassan's hand for blessings at his home in Penaug, his home state. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad named Abdullah as his new deputy, replacing farmer deputy Anwar Ibrahim who has been charged with corruption and sexual allegations (AFP photo)

Marshalls atoll considered, then rejected, for N-testing

MAJURO (AFP) - A series be tested at Taongi. northern Marshall Islands atoll was considered but later rejected as a third nuclear test site during the 1950s, according to a recently declassified U.S. government report.

Uninhabited Taongi, Marshall Islanders as "Bokak", was under consideration as an alternative to Encwetak and Bikini utolls for the 1958 Hardtack nuclear test series, the final 32 U.S. tests in the Marshalls. It is located nearly 800

kilometres north of here. Taongi was in the spotlight in the late 1980s when researchers from the Hawaii-based East West Centre reported on its pristine and unusual marine habitat, with elevated reef structure found nowhere else in the Marshall Islands, and recommended it be placed on

At the same time an American company proposed using Taongi as a dump for municipal garbage shipped from the U.S. West Coast, a proposal that was later scrapped. U.S. nuclear test planners in 1957 proposed that tour of the biggest hydro-

the World Heritage list.

"in order to take advantage of presumably better firing weather there than at Bikini," according to the U.S. report, parts of which were deleted prior to its release here last

week. It is one of tens of thousands of documents that have been released over the last three years to the Marshall Islands by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Planning for the test series was complicated by the fact that U.S. planners were late in deciding about whether or not to use Taongi.

Washington decided on June 7, 1957, after months of consideration, that Taongi would not be used as a third test site.

The report showed that the use of two sites, with multiple monitoring capa- provide the exact size of bilities at both test sites, each of the 67 U.S. allowed the operation to nuclear tests in the be "accomplished on a reasonable time scale."

U.S. test planners recommended that future series follow this two-atoll test pattern. "although substitution of Taongi for Bikini should prove to be extremely advantageous gen bombs in the Hardrack due to the more favourable 8.9 megatonnes.

Taongi."

Taongi is much smaller in land area and lagoon space than both Bikini and Enewetak, which have huge enclosed lagoons of calm ocean area that provided anchorage for dozens of navy vessels used in monitoring the weapons lests.

In contrast, Taongi's lagoon is less than eight kilometres across at its widest point and less than 15 kilometres long.

The U.S. report includes numerous words, most apparently relating to the size of the nuclear tests. that are blacked out by a magic marker and also marked "deleted."

Other released U.S. documents Marshall Islands.

The report noted that all tests in the Hardtack series at Enewetak Atoll should be limited to a maximum of five megatonnes in size. but the Oak test on June 28, 1958, was recorded at

Mahathir revamps cabinet, asserts control Another Asian diplomat

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) - Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has moved swiftly to reassert control with a cabinct revamp which put loyalists in key posts and filled a political vacuum, politicians and diplomats said.

Mahathir, under pressure to name a deputy and relinquish the home ministry, named Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahnad Badawi, 59, to both positions in a weekend reshuffle that caught the country by surprise.

opposition demanded that Mahathir give up the powerful home ministry, which controls the country's internal security apparatus, after an official finding implicated police in the beating of his detained tonner deputy Anwar lbrahim.

A power gap also emerged United Malays in the National Organisation (LIMNO) after the September firing of Anwar, who headed a large faction in the party which dominates the ruling National Front coalition.

Party officials said UMNO members fell in line behind Mahathir's choice of deputy. easing worries over succession if something happens to him. Mahathir, 73, has been in power since 1981 and has had a heart bypass,

"He is responding to pressure within his own party, it seems," a Southeast Asian diplomat told AFP. "Having no deputy is not reassuring, whether internally or to the

said the reshuffle was "a way of sharing around the responsibility and blame.

"It was well-coordinated, he defused the situation a little," he said, adding that There is now a clear line of succession, the immediate issue has been addressed."

However, one Western diplomat described the reshuffle as "a sign of weak-

"The fact that Mahathir gave up the home ministry was an implicit confession that he was responsible (for Anwar's beating), he said. "He has just surrounded himself with yes-men."

Anwar, 51, was sacked after falling out of favour with Mahathir and arrested leading massive protests. He was charged with corruption and sexual misconduct, which he dismisses as part of a political conspiracy.

Mahathir gave the finance ministry, also held by Anwar prior to his sacking, to a close friend and economic adviser, Daim Zainuddin, 60,

Another loyal Mahathir aide. Defence Minister Syed Hamid Albar, 55, was named foreign minister in place of Abdullah.

"I think PM has always shown wisdom in the decision-making process. He has always been able to look at scenarios and environments that are best for the country," Sved Hantid said.

He said Abdullah was "a most appropriate appointment under the current circuinstances.

An opposition group, the Democratic People's Coalition or Gagasan, said Mahathir had produced "a new cubinet of cronies that has further eroded public and international confidence" in

his leadership. "Interestingly, Dr. Mahathir relinquished his post as home minister at a time when the ministry is under heavy attack from the public, chairman Tian Chua said. adding that Abdullah "will now be the apologist for Dr. Mahathir's incompetence."

Syed Husin Ali, president of the finy opposition group Malaysian People's Party. said the reshuffle allowed Mahathir to retain control while deflecting criticism.

He said that "appearances may deceive, but in reality the PM will continue to dominute the cubiner and the country in his own authoritarian ways."

But not all opposition groups have wrinen off Abdullah, who is known in Malaysia's rough political arena as a clean politician and

a nice guy. Lim Kii Siang, secretarygeneral of the Democratic Action Party, urged Abdullah to get Mahathir's backing for the establishment of an independent commission to look into Anwar's maltreatment under police custody.

He also urged Abdullah to create a home ministry "with

Canadian executive hostage freed by leftist guerrillas

BOGOTA (AFP) — The chief Reinhart said he spent most executive of a Canadian com- of three months in the the Red Cross while waiting pany who offered himself in Colombian jungle with FARC, for his return home to be exchange for an employee abducted by Colombian rebels was freed Saturday after three months as a hostage, authorities reponed here.

On Oct. 6 Norben Reinhart, 49, president of Ontario-based Grey Sur Resources, voluntarily took the place of his employee Ed Leonard - who Reinhart had never met who had been abducted in fate June by Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels while Greystar and another outfit, Terramundo Drilling, drilled for oil in the

Bucaramanga region. "I feel wonderful. I feel like I've been reborn," said Reinhart in Bucaramanga in a telephone interview with a Canadian reporter. He said his captors treated him respectful-

excharge himself for his employee, Reinhart — a native of Raymond, Alberta - said: "I just tried to fulfil my responsibilities to my employees, that's all. It was just something that had to be done to lessen the tensions of the situation."

As to his decision to

the oldest and strongest guerrilla l'orce in Colombia, perfecting his command of Spanish. He was surprised when one of his captors told him: "Let's go, you're going

home today." "We are happy that he is healthy and safe," said Andre Leblanc, a Canadian foreign ministry spokesman, adding that no Canadian hostages remained anywhere in the world.

Leblanc said the Canadian government and the embassy in Bogota were directly involved in the negotiations, "We worked with his family, the Colombian government and the Catholic Church," he

The ministry refused to reveal the conditions under which Reinhart was freed or comment on whether the 5000000-Canadian (\$330,000) ransom demanded by the rebels was paid.

The only thing I can say is that the negodations were very long and complex. Normally in Colombia, it takes a year." Leblane said.

arranged by authorities in the next few days.

Would-be hostage Leonard said the executive called him early Saturday with the news. "It was the best wake-up call I have ever had," he said.

Another hostage, the German physician Oumar Broda, 60, was also set free by rebels thanks to efforts by the German foreign ministry and the Roman Catholic bishop of Santo Domingo de Colorados, Ecuador.

A spokesman for Broda's abductors from another rebelgroup, the National Liberation Army (ELN), said the physician was freed "in the context of an agreement we have with Germans citizens."

The government's anti-kidnapping "tsar", Jose Alfredo Escobar said seven other foreigners remain in the hands of rebel groups.

Meanwhile, Colombian govemment negotiators and FARC rebels were holding a first round of talks Saturday in the town of San Vicente del Caguan in a bid to end decades of violence.

Don't make me a princess like Diana, says royal fiancée

LONDON (AFP) --Royal fiancee Sophie Rhys-Jones, who marries Prince Edward later this year, has told the queen she does not want to be a princess because of comparisons with Diana.

According to Sunday's British press, Rhys-Jones resents media comparisons of her strong resemblance to the late princess and wants to be recognised

in her own right.

The Sunday
Telegraph said she had told Queen Elizabeth she did not want to become a princess when she marries the monarch's youngest

Nor does she want to be known as Her Royal Highness The Princess Edward, which would be her official title, believing it is old-fashioned to be known by her husband's name.

The solution would be for the queen to make Edward a duke - royal experts say the Dukedom Cambridge is the most likely. Edward, 34.

Rhys-Jones,

announced

engagement

Wednesday after five years of dating. They did not set a

date or venue for the wedding, but it is expected to be held at St. George's Chapel in Windsor, west of London, by summer. Since the engage

ment, she has been compared incessantly to Diana in press accounts here, complete with photographs of the two women in similar clothes and poses.

Rhys-Jones'

smile, blonde hair and eyes strongly hlue recall Diana, the late ex-wife of Edward's older brother Charles. However their personalities are contpletely different. Rhys-Jones has been praised for her level-headedness, apparent lack of

Diana died in a car crash in Paris early on Ang. 31, 1997. It has become cus-

tomary for the monarch to give his or her younger sons a dukedom, either on coming of age or marriage Prince Andrew was made Duke of York on

the eve of his marriage io Sarah Ferguson in



Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Jordan Times

جوردن تايمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجلبزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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> **Executive Editor** Abdullah Hasanat

Responsible Editor Elia Nasrallah

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Initiative worth supporting

DESPITE THE fact that the seven points French President Jacques Chirac recently proposed as a basis for the new international order are a faithful reflection of the existing principles of the U.N. Charter, their reaffirmation now is a timely and positive step. The repudiation of established international norms and practices by small and mighty nations must have been behind Chirac's timely reminder that the new international order must not continue to he defined by one superpower, the U.S.

The flouting of the U.N. Charter and other international laws by one nation or another should no longer characterise the global order. The recent decision of Washington and London to strike at Iraq without U.N. permission must have been on the mind of the French president when he spoke up against the tyranny of power. This also explains why Paris is speaking more forcefully than ever against unilateral actions, especially those taken hy major powers and why this issue is heing placed at the top of the seven-point French list.

The struggle against the application of dou hle standards in dealing with different nations must also become part and parcel of the proposed order. That order should also ensure that peoples should not he punished for the wrongdoings of their leaders especially in countries where democracy is lacking. Economic sanctions, we must have realised hy now, are anathema to human rights and humanitarian law.

The abolition of weapons of mass destruction must become a global objective. Biological and chemical weapons are just as dreadful and indiscriminate as nuclear weapons and must be not only be outlawed. Most conventions against mass destruction arsenals remain without an iron-clad system of inspection and verification, and this flaw requires immediate rectification.

France has made a good beginning that calls for additional support. As Paris intends to submit its ideas to the U.N. General Assembly for consideration, other member states should submit their own proposals in order to make the French initiative stronger and complete.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Raja Elissa quoted U.S. officials as saying that the recent allied attack against Iraq caused the death of around 1600 people, and destroyed several sensitive areas eliminating the country's ability to produce any kinds of weapons of mass destruction. According to Elissa, these areas were disclosed by UNSCOM's spies, who submitted their reports to the U.S. instead of the U.N. Why is the U.S. determined to continue inspections if the strikes have paralysed Iraq's capabilities to manufacture such weapons, asked the writer. Both the U.S. and U.K. clearly said their most important objectives are destroying President Saddam Hussein's regime, controlling the region's oil and satisfying Israel, Elissa claimed.

Al Dustour's Oraih Rintawi said Jordan is concerned about internal and public opinion changes in Israel because Israelis, unlike most populations of the countries in the region, form Israeli policies. Whether the Arabs like it or not, Israel has a "presence" in the region, especially in Jordanian, Palestinian, Lehanese, Syrian and Egyptian issues, Rintawi added. After the Arab-Israeli struggle became "negotiable and peaceful," it is natural be concerned about Israeli public opinion. According to the writer, Jordan has a greater effect on that public opinion than the Palestinian National Authority because of the Kingdom's diplomacy in dealing with different Israeli figures for long time. However, Rintawi said, Jordanian diplomatic efforts have been subdued because of the upcoming elections in Israel, because Jordan does not want to interfere in internal issues. Despite all that has happened, the Kingdom should continue to keep a close eye on Israeli politics and any new figures the elections might throw up, the writer said.

Economic review

The use of currency boards in Jordan

NET CAPITAL flows to devel- is comprised of three basic ele-\$50 billion per year in 1987-89 to more than \$150 hillion in 1995-97 before declining in the aftermath of the Asian crisis. With the removal of restrictions on capital flows, the issue of exchange rate becomes of vital interest, especially in small economies.

Recently, there has been a recurrence of articles in the media about currency boards. What are they? A currency hoard arrangement is a new yet old idea (there were currency boards in 38 countries in the 1960s, which went down to 9 in the '80s and hack up to 14 last year), which can provide an added element of stability to the currency: the assurance of a long-term institutional commitment to the fixed

oping countries have tripled from ments: a fixed exchange rate to a peg currency (such as the dinar/dollar exchange rate peg), automatic convertibility (i.e., convertibility whenever desired). and a long-term commitment to the arrangement (usually done through a legislative change in the law of the central bank). Demand for a currency that is subject to currency hoard arrangement is higher than that for currencies without such guarantees and helps create a virtuous cycle as the credibility for the currency hoard currency (for example the dinar) becomes similar to that of the anchor currency (the U.S. dollar). The long-term trust (confidence effect) established by these guarantees and arising from the growth in money demand leads to lower interest A currency board arrangement rates and thus increases the pos-

sibility for higher growth rates and increased net foreign investments to the country which are usual prompted by the long-term stability of the exchange rate. In addition, having a currency board reduces the risk of capital flight at times of trouble - to-date, no currency board has had to he ahandoned due to a crisis.

Recent empirical evidence confirms that currency boards do better in small countries than all other fixed exchange rate regimes. Jordan is already implementing two of the three components of a currency board arrangement; the third - the long-run insotutional commitment - adds the very useful assurance of long-term commitment to the peg, a very valuable assurance indeed that helps deepen the financial market and sus-

However, (going strictly by the unavoidable no-free lunch principle) since there is no free currency hedge or insurance, having a currency board does not come without a certain cost to the central hank of the implementing

First, an anchor currency (such as the U.S. dollar or the deutsche mark or, only since the first of January of this year, the euro -Jordan of course uses the dollar) has to be chosen: an exchange rate has to be set given that the arrangement covers the monetary aggregate (the full amount of the reserve money): a margin for monetary intervention must be decided upon without forsaking full coverage of the reserve money: the law of the central hank would have to be changed tains the long-run demand for the to reflect the currency hoard

arrangement (simply changing the bylaw or regulation will not give investors the correct signal of long-term stability); and finally the relationship between the central hank and the government has to be redefined with transparency to reflect the necessities of the arrangement.

Overall, a currency board may be a Jordanian option that is worth looking into in the future. It, more than any other monetary tool, ensures long-term stability for the exchange rate and douses the flames of rumours. However, if it is ever to become a reality, it would require careful planning and implementation (never attempt this recipe during a financial crisis), consensus building (like all good policies), andthe rehabilitation of weak hanks.



May 4: Check, mate and bye, bye Bibi

NETANYAHU presumably believes that he has checkmated Yasser Arafat by scheduling Israel's elections for May 17 and June 1, soon after the May 4 date on which the "Oslo process" terminates in accordance with the terms of its various agreements and on which President Arafat has repeatedly promised (or "threatened," to use the term adopted by the American and Israeli press) to proclaim the establishment of the state of Palestine on the soil of Palestine.

While reading Mr. Netanyahu's mind is scarcely an exact science, he does appear to believe that he has cleverly trapped President Arafat in a situation doesn't. If he does "proclaim" the state on May 4 (or, more precisely, reaffirms its existence, since it was already proclaimed on November 15, 1988 and promptly recognised by over 100 other states). Mr. Netanyahu promises (or threatens) to "annex" most of the West Bank (all of "Area C" and perhaps "Area b" as well) and to send in the artay to blockade the small pockets of land under Palestinian control and bring them to their knees. He appears to believe that this would assure his reelection and has even suggested in a speech to the Likud Central Committee that President Arafat may now change his mind about acting on May 4 so as not to help him be reelected.

Of course, if President Arafat fails to act on May 4, he will forfeit whatever remains of his credibiliwith his own a typle and, perhaps after considerable intra-Palestinian conflict, be replaced by someone less reasonable, less accommodating, less peace-oriented and hence more easily demonised (as he once was) to the detriment of Palestinian aspirations for fundamental human rights and jus- to veto, a British veto would be unnecessary, while, tice. Either way, Bibi, the brilliant strategist, wins if the U.S. chose not to veto, a British veto would

In fact, on careful analysis, it is far more likely that Mr. Netanyahu has checkmated himself, making May 4 an even more desirable date on which to eaffirm the existence of the state of Palestine on the soil of Palestine and ensuring that Palestinian statehood will be established in the most favourable circumstances imaginable.

Imagine that, on May 4, President Arafat were to publicly confirm that the state of Palestine has been speech there, he moved closer still. legally sovereign in all the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, since the state was proclaimed in 1988 and that the May 4. The reason is simple and understandable. "Palestinian [National] Authority" through which the state established its presence and authority on a portion of its national territory has ceased to exist with the termination of the "Oslo process" and were then to publicly declare that all Palestinian governmental institutions established on significant minority of the Israeli public or outrage Palestinian territory as organs of the "Palestinian" the entire Arab and Muslim World, already in a [National] Authority] are now governmental insti- state of unprecedented and-American fervour in tutions of the state of Palestine and that the state of Palestine is appealing for diplomatic recognition violations of international law and U.N. resolutions from all states which have not already recognised it and its passive acquiescence towards Israeli violaand applying to further upgrade Palestine's status at tions of international law, U.N. resolutions and the the United Nations from "permanent observer" (a status in which "Palestine" replaced the PLO in December 1988, one month after Palestine's declatus in July 1988) to full member state.

government soon to be elected, on an accelerated loan guarantees which he had demanded was (including final boundary demarcations and an equitable sharing of an undivided Jerusalem) with a view to achieving a new relationship between the two states and peoples based on peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and human dignity so as to
finally provide both peace and security for both

If, notwithstanding Mr. Netanyahu's contemptuous trashing of the Wye River accords to which Israelis and Palestinians in the land both peoples

How would the international community react? The consistent support of the international community for Palestinian statehood was again demonstrated on December 9, 1998, when the U.N. General Assembly adopted its annual resolution in which he is damned if he does and damned if he confirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination by a record vote of 162 (including all European Union states) to two (Israel and the United States), with only six abstentions, while adding for the first time the significant phrase without excluding the option of a state."

At the Security Council level, China and Russia alleady recognise the state of Palestine. by December 1998, the French Foreign Ministry organised a two-day symposium in Paris on "The Issue of the Palestinian state" of which French support for Palestinian statehood, on both legal and policy grounds, was made clear to all the Arabs, Israelis. Europeans and Americans invited to attend and a French diplomat cited the figure 140 for the number of states which currently recognised the state of Palestine. It is difficult to believe that the United Kingdom, having consistently apported Palestinian self-determination in international organisations, would veto U.N. membership for Palestine (Norwithstanding British inclination to follow the United States blindly, if the U.S. chose

How would the United States react? In January 1998. President Bill Clinton moved to within a subtie nuance of endorsing Palestinian statehood when he publicly told President Arafat that, in the American view, an essential goal of the pace process is that the Palestinians should be able to realise their aspirations to live as a free people." During his December 1998 visit to Gaza and his

The United States will no doubt be urging (or threatening) President Arafat not to do anything on An affirmation of Palestinian statehood and an application for full U.N. membership would force the United States to make a difficult decision it would rather avoid. Its decision would either outrage the Israel first lobby in the United States and a light of America's hyperactivity towards Israeli agreements Israel has signed with America's blessmes encouragement

However, if the United States had to make a ration of independence, and which was upgraded to decision, it would be more likely to do the right an effective "super-observer" or "quasi-state" sta- thing in the context of an impending Israeli vote on whether or not to return Mr. Netanyahu to power Imagine further that, at the same time, President than in any other conceivable circumstances.

Arafat were to confirm his eagerness and that of the Americans believe, probably correctly, that their state of Palestine to negotiate with the new Israeli refusal to give Yitzhak Shamir the \$10 billion of

back, all outstanding permanent status kester instrumental in the brazil electronic's decision to replace him with Yitzhak Rabin, and President Clinton and his Middle East "peace team" clearly have no desire to deal with Mr. Netanyahu one day longer than they are legally obligated to do so.

> President Clinton and his associates devoted so much personal time and effort, the United States were to veto Palestinian membership in the U.N., then Mr. Netanyahu could present himself to his electorate as "the world's sole superpower," to whom even the United States must kneel in humble submission. If, on the other hand, after Mr. Netanyahu had made opposition to Palestinian statehood the first plank in his electoral platform. the United States were to permit Palestine's admission to the U.N. as a member state, while virtually all other states (including those of the European Union) were extending full diplomatic recognition to Palestine, Mr. Netanyahu would be made to look ridiculous and anachronistic. He would be invisited. If the United States made such a decision prior to the first round of the Israeli elections, it is unlikely that, in the expected multi-candidate field, Mr. Netanyahu would even qualify for the June 1 second-round run-off.

In the context of the American decision-making process, it is extremely fortunate that there will be an uncommonly long 18 months between this year's Israeli elections and next year's American elections. This should be perceived as familialiting the personal "political costs" of a pro-Palestine decision. Given an opportunity to ensure Mr. Netanyahu's replacement by a more Rabin-like figure, it is most unlikely that the United States will forsake the chance and choose instead to put American citizens and embassies throughout the world at risk of an explosion of Arab and Muslim frustration and rage.
What could Mr. Netanyahu do? It is far from cer-

tain, particularly after Shimon Peres' repeated declaration that a Palestinian state is in Israel's own national interest, that he could find a Knesset majority to support "annexing" Palestinian lands in the waning days of a campaign in which be was in deep political trouble. It is also far from certain that Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai (or his successor) would order the army to invade the West Bank for reasons which transparently relate more to electoral manocuving than to national security - or that, if given, such orders would be followed. Furthermore, even if Mr. Netanyahu could carry out either or both of these threats, it is most unlike. ly, with polls repeatedly showing a majority of Israelis ready to accept a Palestinian state, that such provocative behaviour would help, rather than harm, his electoral fortunes. They would, however, be certain to outrage international opinion and strengthen sympathy and support for Palestine, Mr. Netanyahu would be damned if he does and dammed if he doesn't

If President Arafat can keep his nerve and keep his promise, May 1999 will bring checkmate and early retirement for Benyamin Netanyahu and a giant step forward towards peace with some measure of justice and a better life for Israelis, Palestinians and all the peoples of the Middle East.

The writer is a Paris-based international lawyer who writes frequently on the Israeli Palestinian peace

LETTERS Why amnesty?

To the editor:

THERE IS a rumour circulating within the legal community that an amnesty is expected on the occasion of HM King Hussein's return to Jordan.

An amnesty differentiates between citizens of a society hy making some more equal than others, and thus is counter to the basic notion of justice, i.e. "Citizens are equal before the law and are all entitled to equal protection by the law." Therefore, by granting an individual a pardon for a crime, amnesty is deoying the legal rights of another indi-

I write from personal experience, having returned to Jordan after a very long absence. In 1993, I was shot at and my home was robbed by a convict incarcerated for attempted murder. He was released from prison by the 1992 amnesty. Is he too to be given another chance? He may be third time lucky and murder an innocent person?

Since 1993, I have put my trust in the Jordanian law by initiating a number of court cases against my partner who. was charged by the public prosecutors for false accounting and other criminal charges.

No one should be above the law. However, only people of ill-intent appear to benefit from an amnesty. whilst the innocent individual's rights seems to be sacrificed. Citizens will loose faith in the justice system if the guilty are not held to account for their actions; because equally, to an individual's legal right "justice should be done and must be seen to be done."

Amnesty is divisive, unjust to the innocent, harmful to the Amnesty is divisive, unjust to the uniocent, and turne of this society, and does disservice to its architects.

Ziad Isma'il Bilbeisi Ismai'l Bilbeisi and Co.

The way it is

To the editor:

I AM AN American expatriate who has lived in the Middle East for a number of years. For some reason, Denis Engelleder's letter to the editor ('My enemy's enemy...' JT. January 6) upset me. Even though he is a postgraduate of political and Islamic studies, I feel that somehow he has missed the point in his evaluation of Arab and Islamic reaction to "Desert Fox."

What should be the issue here is not how bad or good a leader Saddam Hussein is. The world is full of ruthless and cruel dictators many of whom have been responsible for killing thousands of their own people. Yet we do not see our noble "good guy" Americans try to crush their regimes, destroy their cities and bomb their babies. If you want to speak about justice and the true concerns of the American government, you only have to look at the state of Israel which owes its very existence to the continued and unwavering support of America. Palestinians are killed in the streets every day for throwing stones against heavily armed Israeli patrols. Every day new Jewish settlements pop up and every day mine. Palestiman land is confiscated. And what about the Palestinian homes that are bulldozed to dust and their occupants turned out in the cold? Yet we do not see American planes bombing Netanyahu do we? Nor do we question the huge stock of chemical and biological weapons that Israel holds, let alone its nuclear capabilities. Talk about double standards! America is not in the Gulf to protect Saddam's neighbours from hith America is in the Gulf to protect their own and Israel's infatests. America does not really want to get rid of Saddam for they could have done this long ago. They want him to remain m power so they have an excuse to keep their forces in the Gulf. May I remind you that it was America who supplied Iraq and Iran with weapons so they could conveniently kill each

other during the Iraq-Iran war. There is no justice here.

Also, I suggest you look deeply into American history and you might be shocked to know that a great proportion indians was massacred by those just and valuations. Americans. Whole tribes were slaughtered and as for biological weapons. Americans weaved smallpox germs into blankets and then so graciously and generously donated them to Indians as a goodwill gesture knowing that the Indians had no resistance to this "white man's" disease. And then look at how Americans bought and sold Africans as slaves and how hombly their human rights were abused.

I think the Iraqi people have suffered enough and been purished enough. Justice can only be served if the Americans leave them alone and lift the sanctions.

Furthermore, it is not that people in the Middle East are incapable of understanding or unaware of the misdeeds of Saddam Hussein. But two wrongs do not make a right. And America has no oght to continually wage mass genocide an the Iraqi people. And in my own opinion, since when has

America really stood on the side of justice anyway?

Saddam is merely a pawn in the game of chess that America is playing. No matter what he does Americans are ready to bomh him and he knows it. It has recently been revealed the UNSCOM did have spies working for the Israelis. And townuch of UNSCOM's reports were misleading so that the good guy Americans could rush right in and blow the find off the face of the earth?

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Anchoring the Madaba Plains Project, Tell el-'Umayri includes A Jordan Times Series substantial remains of several Iron Age fortified towns — part II

(Note: This is the second of three articles on the excavations at Tell el-Ilmayri and associated surveys and emaller excavations within the context of the Modaba Plains Project. This article concentrates on the important Iron Age towns at the site; the first article focused on the earliest Bronze Age towns; the third article looks at the Classical period and later sites, and the results of regional surveys and excava-

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YEAR.

AS IF ITS three different Bronze Age settlements were not enough to put Tell el-'Umayri on the world archaeological map, the site also contains what may be Iordan and Palestine's best preserved urban remains from the Iron Age I (1200-900 BC).

The walls of several houses excavated in the past 14 years still stand two metres high; pillar bases supported wooden posts that held up the house roofs, while the floor was partially paved and surfaced with beaten earth. Other parts were paved with flagstones. The floor plan of these buildings mirfors the well-documented 'four-room houses" from Iron I Palestine hill settle-

A household cultic centre comprised a standing stone on pavement, some son of altar, and post bases to support a curtain wall between the cultic installation and a domestic room. Inside that room were a storage bin, a cooking hearth, a grinding stone and mortar, and a small

The Iron Age I town (from the time of the biblical Judges, around 1200-1000 BC) was re-fornified and protected by a thick town wall standing over four metres high, some of whose stones measured a metre wide and two metres long. The Iron Age I fortifications basically built upon and expanded the previous defences from the Middle and Late Bronze Age towns. Over 35 metres of

the Iron Age I wall have been exposed. At the top of the fortifications was a double ('proto'-casemate) wall that may have surrounded the entire city. Below it, successively, were a steep rampart made of beaten earth, a lower second wall (a "retaining wall") around the base of the site, and the dry most measuring five metres deep and eight metres wide. These elements can be seen clearly in the major excavation on the west

side of the tell. This is thought to be the only defensive system so far excavated from an Iron Age town in Jordan/Palestine that retains all these features. The rooms inside the casemate wall were used for storage purposes, as evidenced by scores of collared pithoi storage jars with the remains of grains, lentils, seeds, chick peas, and other dry goods foodstuffs. The rooms that formed the casemate wall actually formed parts of houses that were located around the periphery of the site. Also excavated within the casemate wall rooms were military hardware and the fractured, burned bones of at least two individuals who probably died defending their

The location of the town gate(s) in the walls remains a puzzle that will only be solved with further excavations.

Who lived here?

One of the most fascinating aspects of the 'Umayri project is the identity of the peoples who built and destroyed the first towns at the site. The cultural finds suggest that the inhabitants of the 12th century BC town were relatively "simple people with a limited repertoire of pottery and objects, perhaps reflecting the settlement of local tribal and nomadic groups, much as the bedouins have been doing in modern Jordan in the past half a century." according to Dr. Larry Herr of Canadian University College and a co-director of the 'Umayri

One theory being assessed is that these Iron Age I inhabitants of Tell el-Umayri town became the people we know today as the Ammonites, the ancient group that gave their name to modern Amman. Other tribal groups of

the area, and known from the Bible and other ancient sources, may also be good candidates for the inhabitants of the town. Members of the biblical tribes of Reuben or Gad may have been associated with this and other sites in this region daving from the Late Bronze-Early Iron transition period, around 1250

Or, Amorites connected with the kingdom of King Sihon may have been the first town dwellers here, Dr. Herr said, adding that the walled town could have been destroyed in the early 12th century BC by Ammonites, Israelites, Midianites, or even Egyptians,

It is now well documented that the Iron Age I town was destroyed around 1150 BC or somewhat earlier by a violent conflagration that left behind debris of burned bricks and rooting materials

such as wooden beams and reeds. One room was filled with almost two metres of pure ashes. The remains of huge amounts of stored foodstuffs amidst the collapsed roof debris suggest that food was stored on or in the roofing system. The presence of so much stored food also may mean that the town was not destroyed after a long siege, but rather suddenly and very violently. A military attack seems to be the most likely cause of the destruction, to judge by the many

bronze weapons found in the debris. In the century after this destruction, the site again supported a relatively small settlement. Excavated houses from around 1000 BC had 18 large jars that included grape and olive seeds, but the extent of that settlement has not yet been determined. The team excavating the site is exploring the hypothesis that after the violent destruction of their walled town in the early 12th century BC, the surviving inhabitants or their descendants moved three kilometres to the east, where they established a walled town on the more easily defensible site now known as Tell Jawa (just north-east of Yadoudeh/Kan Zaman).

Suggested identification

Some scholars tend to identify the Iron Age I town at Tell el-'Umayri with the Old Testament biblical town of Abelkeramim, mentioned in Judges 11:33.

This town is also mentioned in a list of cities subdued by the Egyptian Pharaoh Tuthmosis III (1504-1450 BC). In 1987 the excavators found (on a jar handle) a scarab-seal impression with an upright cartouche containing Tuthmosis' name (though the seal impression probably dated from the time of Ramses IV around the middle of the 12th century BC). The cartouche is flanked by a



The excavated dolmen from the Early Bronze Age settlement at Tell el-'Umayri (Photo by Raml G. Khouri)

winged uraeus and the words "the Good God, the Lord of the Two Lands."

(Abel-keramim, also called Abelcheramim ("district/plain of the vineyards"], was the place where the Bible says that Jephthah the Gileadite defeated the Ammonites in banle [Judges 11:33]. Jephthah was a mighty warrior who may have lived in the Jordan Valley, possibly at the site of Zaphon (associated today with Tell el-Qos or Tell es-Sa'adiyyeh, in the central Jordan River Valley], Some biblical translations say Jephthah was buried "in his city, Zaphon," "in his city in Gilead," or, "among the cities of Gilead," Jephthah the Gileadite fled to Tob when his halfbrothers refused him an inheritance because his mother was a prostitute, and the Ammonites hired soldiers from Tob

to fight against David [Judges 11:1-5; 2] Samuel 10:6-8]. Tob [or, the Land of Tob] comprises a town and its area east of the Jordan River, between Gilead and the eastern desert. In Tob Jephthah was joined by "worthless fellows" and brigands who "went raiding with him"; but when the Ammonites and Israelites were at war in the mid-11th century BC. the elders of Gilead asked him to be their leader, and he became a major vow he had made to God in return for God's granting him victory in battle over the Ammonites. Jephthah had to sacrifice his daughter and only child

upon returning home to Mizpah.) Dr. Randall Younker of Andrews University has suggested that Abelkeramim might be better identified with nearby Tell Jawa, based on topographic and climatic evidence combined with information from the 4th century AD historian Eusebius and the mid-1st Millennium BC itinerary of the Egyptian leader Tuthmoses III. Wadi Henu north of Jawa is well suited for a wine industry, as evidenced by the large number of winepresses the team found in that area. He believes that a major ancient road ran into Ammon, past Jawa, just as it does today, rather than fol-

lowing the route of the airpon highway near 'Umayri. During the second half of the Iron Age (around 900-550 BC), the Ammon region usually found itself living under Assyrian tutelage, a period of Pax Assyrfaca that brought with it stability for many centuries. This allowed people to expand beyond their large fortified towns and to move out and live in numerous rural villages and large

farmsteads. Transjordanian The provinces that included Ammon appear to have flourished under Assyrian rule, and also under the succeeding Babylonian rule starting in the early 6th century BC. The Ammonite inhabitants of the 'Umayri lifestyle based on agriculture and trade well into the 5th century BC, the excavations reveal. The most substantial evidence for the

continuity of the Ammonites at this town into the Babylonian and Persian periods comes from the excavated Late Iron Age administrative complex towards the south-west side of the sum-

Dr. Herr explained that "the Ammunites apparently controlled the city at Tell el- Umayri in the later Iron Age, making it an administranve centre near their

Moabites."

Seals and impressions

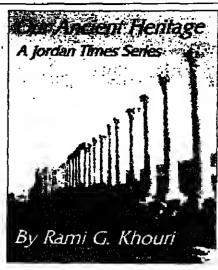
southern border with the

Ten new seals and seal impressions were discovered in this year's dig (1998), mostly associated with bureaucratic activities at the late from Age administrative complex. No other fron Age site in Jordan or Palestine has approached the more than 80 seals and seal impressions discovered to date at Tell el- Umayri.

One seal impression found in 1984 mentions a prominent official of the Ammonite government who served King Baalis in the time of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 40:14). Dated from the early 6th century BC, it reads; "belonging to Milkom'ur, servant of Baalyasha." The name Baalyasha t'Baal saves') is the Ammonite spelling of the biblical King Bualis. This is another interesting piece of material evidence that can be compared with the biblical text.

When the Babylonian King Neb-uchadnezzar attacked Judah in 588 BC. the Bible reports, some Jews fled for safety to Ammon and the other Transjordanian kingdoms of Moab and Edom to the south. According to Jeremiah 40:11, "...when all the Jews who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon" had appointed Gedaliah as governor of Judah they all returned to Judah. Around 582 BC, the Ammonite King Baalis ordered Ishmael, a renegade prince of Judah, to assassinate Gedaliah, after which Ishmael fled to Ammon to escape from Johanan who had gone to kill him tJeremiah 40:14:41:12-15).

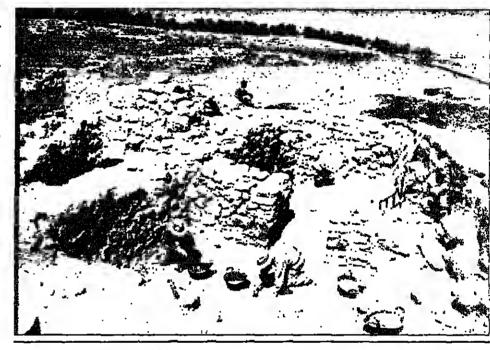
The official who made the seal impression "belonging to Milkom'ur, servant of Baalyasha" probably worked in an administrative centre within the walled town - most likely the complex that has been identified and excavated along the west side of the summit. This large complex dating from about 550 BC was built of massive sione walls measuring over a metre thick and resting on deep foundations - a typical ancient Ammonite monarchy architec-



Babylon or other destinations. This hypothesis, if correct, would explain why so many wine-making farmsteads were suddenly built during one period. all in a monumental architectural style that probably reflected Animonite royal putronage under Babylonian imperial tutelage or vassalage.

The available evidence to date suggests that the buildings of the Iron II administrative complex were built around 580-560 BC, and were used well into the Persian period (539-332) BC). Among the important findings were Aramaic seal impressions with the names of an official ('Shuha') and the name of the province of Ammon -- the first material proof for the existence of a Persian province of Aminon, Shuba was probably a governor or treasurer of the Persian province of Ammon, Dr. Herr

Other, earlier, seal impressions from



A general view of the excavation of the Bronze and Iron Age settlements at Tell el-'Umayri (Photo by Rami G. Khouri)

tural style. The complex' largest room had three levels of plastered floors, and may have served as an open courtyard. Its public trather than private domestic) purpose is also suggested by the fact that no domestic objects were found on its floors, and very fine quality ponery was

found on and just above the floors. These excavated remains are from basements which supported the government buildings above.

"This complex probably administered large groups of rural farmers in the hills around Tell el-'Umavri who produced wine as tribute to their Babylonian overlords during the 6th century BC, in the late Iron Age and Persian period." Dr. Herr suggested. His hypothesis is that "after the murder of Gedaliah in 582 BC, the Babylonians took revenge on Ammon for its complicity. The Jewish Roman-era historian Josephus records a Babylonian invasion of Ammon at this time. The 'Umayri administrative complex was then built by the Ammonite monarchy to administer governmentsponsored grape plantations at the farmsteads to produce wine for tribute or to pay for other forms of tribute to Babyion, after the Babylonians defeated Ammon in 582 BC."

The administrative centre at 'Umayri oversaw the production, collection, bulking and shipment of the wine. The many royal administrative seals found in the region were used to record bureaucratic proceedings such as sales, storage or shipment of the wine to

the 7th-6th centuries BC had inscriptions such as "belonging to Shema" belonging to El amats son of Tamak'el," and "belonging to Nasar'il son of "Ifmashal."

Dr. Herr says the evidence from Tell el-'Umayri now indicates that "the Ammonites did not disappear with the Babylonian invasion, but instead flourished into the Persian period, perhaps as late as the Fourth century BC.

A fragmentary but unique find in Jordan from the Iron II administrative complex at Tell el-'Umayri were small pieces of a ceramic life-sized statue, with dramatic bits of a painted eye, an ear, a chin with a thin month, parts of arms, two heels, and chest and shoulder fragments. They were excavated from ancient debris that was thoved from other parts of the site. The original con-

figuration of the statue remains unclear. Other buildings evenvated in this south-western corner of the summit included a small farmstead from the Persian and Hellenistic periods, a twometre-high, plastered Roman cra ritual bath from the Isi century AD, and a 6th century AD Byzantine farm. The region around 'Umayri was intensively settled during the Byzantine period (c. 330-640) AD), and remained in use, though with less density of human settlements, doring the entire Islamic era.

Large towns once again flourished in the region during the Ayyubid-Mainluke era (1174-1516 AD), though not at

Scientists claim to be homing in on a cancer-killing gene

ences between cancer cells and

normal cells." Newbold and col-

leagues tested a lab dish full of

breast cancer cells. They shot

these cells full of human chromo-

somes - notably those known as

By Maggie Fox Reuters

BRITISH SCIENTISTS said last Wednesday they were homing in on a gene that can make cancer cells naturally self-destruct.

Breast cancer cells exposed to a chromosome that carries the gene nearly all died. the scientists reported in the Journal of the

National Cancer Institute. Although the experiment does not offer a cure or therapy, it does show that gene therapy or drugs that target an enzyme known as telomerase might work against Cancer, said Robert Newbold of Brunel University in Uxbridge, who helped lead

Telomerase bas become a recent target of cancer researchers because it seems to confer immortality on cells. Newbold says his group's findings show that such researchers are on the right track.

at centre-right of photo (Photo by Rami G. Khouri)

Part of the 'glacis' defensive system from the Iron Age settlement (the

stairs at right of photo are modern; the original sloping fortification is

Chromosomes carry the genes, and at the end of each chromosome is a section called the telomere. Each time a cell divides, the telomere gets more and more ragged. This contributes to the genetic damage that in turn causes cells to age and die.

In a foetus, which naturally has many dividing cells, cells produce an enzyme known as telomerase, which helps repair these telomeres. But telomerase is no longer produced in a fully developed ani-

However, recent studies have found that most cancer cells produce telomerase. which helps them continue their out-ofcontrol division that produces a tumour. "Cancer cells are immortal." Newbold

said. It is one of the fundamental differ-

3, 8, 12 and 20 - from normal Most had no effect. But the cancer cells treated with chromosome 3 nearly all stopped divid-

Newbold said the implication was clear. "The gene on chromosome 3 is the natural regulator of telomerase which shuts it down in our normal cells at about 20 weeks of foetal development." he said, "Eightyfive to 90 percent of cancers have high levels of this enzyme." So if there is a way to shut down the enzyme. it could be a good



way to battle most cancers.

There is no known way to treat a person using entire chromosomes, but Newbold's team hopes to identify the actual gene later this year. They would then use gene therapy against the cancer - introducing the gene into the body, perhaps using a virus to

Another approach would be what some drug companies are already working on -

designing a drug that inhibits telomerasc.

Newbold is aware that no

gene therapy efforts have been completely successful, except for early experiments to grow new blood vessels in heart

"We do have a long way to go, he said. Cancer is extremely complex." But once

discoveries in test tubes are developed into true therapies, progress will be quick, Newbold predicted.

The public are getting a little bit impatient - they are seeing all these discoveries coming out and no major benefits at the bedside. But we have got to be patient. Its not like attacking bacteria. These are our own cells that have gone awry."

Jordan Times, Monday, January 11, 1999

New business body chief warns on protectionism

GENEVA (R) - The new chief executive officer of President of the Internathe Fransbank Group, said tional Chamber of Comliberalisation of trade and merce (ICC), the world's investment was "the surest top business grouping, has way to secure economic warned that protectionism growth, more jobs and is one of the biggest danprosperity for all nations. gers to the world economy

In a message on taking over the post, Lebanese hanker Adnan Kassar also urged governments to resist pressures sparked hy economic problems to close national markets to foreign goods and services.

"The lesson of history is that such tendencies must not only be resisted but that, when they appear, governments should strive with renewed vigour to open markets and further strengthen the rules-based multilateral trading system," he said.

The message from Kassar, whose grouping is based in Paris, was distributed in Geneva where the World Trade Organisation which administers global trading rules has its head-

quarters. Kassar, chairman and

Further progress in opening up markets around the globe would help boost husiness confidence," he declared.

"Such a policy will go a long way towards restoring growth and stability." Kassar, also chairman of the General Union of

Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for the Arab countries, said a main objective of his twoyear tenure would be to use ICC influence to ensure developing counries were not left on the margins of

the global economy. Kassar took over on Jan. I as head of the ICC, which has over 7,000 member companies and business associations in 13 countries, from Helmut Maucher, chairman of the Swiss Nestle SA.

Israel, India trade seen over \$1.0 billion in 2000

Over 50 per cent of all

trade between India and

Israel is made up of dia-

monds. Halevy said Israel

shipped uncut diamonds to

India for cutting and polish-

ing, and India shipped fin-

ished diamonds to Israel.

He said the trend in trade

High technology and

was starting to change

electronic products have

grown sharply to make up

17 per cent of trade in 1998

from seven per cent in

1997. There is growth in

chemicals and agricultural

He indicated that there

was tremendous scope for

hiotechnology, agricultural

products and technology,

medicine, and information

technology and telecommu-

Uzi Wellish, counsellor,

agricultural affairs at the

Israeli embassy, said that

inputs also," he added.

Indo-Israeli trade

towards other products.

JAIPUR, India (R) — Bilateral trade between India and Israel is expected to top \$1.0 hillion in 2000. a senior Israeli diplomat

"We will achieve our target of crossing a billion dollars of bilateral trade hy 2000," Amiram Halevy, counsellor for economic affairs at the emhassy of Israel in India told a news conference at an international business summit in this northwestern city.

He said trade between the two nations had reached \$700 million in 1998, from a start of \$200 million in 1992, when India and Israel established diplomatic rela-

Halevy said that 1998 was the first year in which the halance of trade between hoth countries had become almost equal.

"In the years before 1998. the balance of trade was always in favour of Israel,"

his country was keen to develop agriculture projects, rural development programmes, and arid land and irrigation ventures in

Exchange Rates

"India and Israel are close to finalising two agreements. One is between the government of the state of Punjah and the Dairy Board of Israel to establish a Punjab Dairy Board on the

Israeli pattern," he said. He added that the other agreement close to fruition was between the National Institute of Rural Development in Hyderabad and Israel's Development and Study Centre for an integrated rural planning development concept.

Wellish said Israel was also involved in tailor-made agricultural programmes to promote cooperative and collective farming on the lines of kibbutzim, drip irrigation and greenhouse

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| AUSTRALIA DOLLA | 1.5748 | 2.5858 | 0.9332 | 1.1265 | 0.2789 | 1,4177 | 0.8283 | 9.4264 | 1.8252 |
| GREEC DRACHINA | 2.7973 | 4.5832 | 1 65/7 | 2,0045 | 0.4943 | 2,5183 | 1 4713 | 167436 | 3.2421 |
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| GARRIAN STERLING | 6,2500 | 6,0900 | 5.7800 | 5,4700 | FRANCE FRANC | 0.1248 | 0.125 |
| FRANCE FRANC | 3,1700 | 3.1000 | 3,0000 | 3,0000 | JAPAN YEN | 0.6386 | 0.641 |
| GERMANY MARK | 3.0600 | 3.0300 | 2.9688 | 2,9063 | HOLLAND GULLDER | 0.3715 | 0.371 |
| ENITERLAND FRANC | 1,3750 | 1,3750 | 1,3750 | 1,4375 | ITALY LIRA | 0.0423 | 0.040 |
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| MEWYORK | KYSE COMPOSITE | 811.08 | 600,18 | 1,88 | | | |
| NEW YORK | AMEX COMPOSITE | 707.78 | 703.98 | 3.78 | | | |
| MEMACKK | B4P 500 | 1275,16 | 1269.73 | B 43 | | | |
| TOKYO | HBQCB-725 | 13391,81 | 13536.50 | -144.75 | | | |
| PARIS | CAC 40 | 4230,67 | 4294,82 | -84.15 | | | |
| FRANKRIKT | COMMERCIBANK | 4861.26 | 4861.26 | 0.00 | | | |

Philippine leader says 1999 a critical year for economy

nications.

MANILA (AFP) — Philippine President Joseph Estrada us said 1999 would a critical year for the local economy. despite modest accomplishnents last year.

This year will even be a more critical year for the economy. It will be a decisive and crucial year in our capacity to overcome the impact of the regional crisis," Estrada in his report to the nation.

We have to meet a GNP of at least three per cent. If we

contracted 0.1 per cent in the (gross national product) target

The Philippines became the eighth recession casualty in Asia in November when its gross domestic product (GDP)

reach that we will be full steam

ahead."

three months to September. Two or more successive contractions in GDP technically means a recession, but Philippine economic managers had argued there was no recession as the country uses GNP as a

yardstick of economic growth.

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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams ACROSS

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36 Lon __ of Cambodia

40 High-wire family act 44 Daddy 45 Brief life story 46 Former

citation: abbr. 51 French friend

53 Wright project 60 Wire spiral

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68 Swiss capital 68 Mr. Knieve 70 Very top grade 71 Mediocre 72 Singer Home 73 Gander's mate

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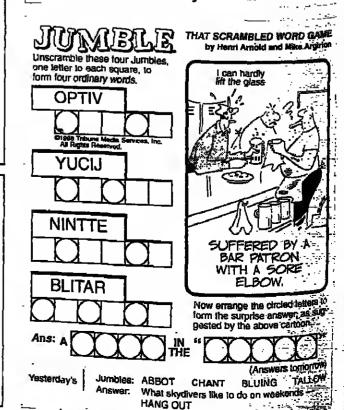




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Birthstone of January: Garnet - Rose Quartz

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Jordinvest to arrange, underwrite JD3.5m convertible bond issue

** JORDAN INVESTMENT Trust (Jordinvest) will arrange and underwrite a convertible bond issue for JD3.5 million to the Union Chemical and Vegetable Oil Industries under an agreement signed between the two sides last week. The agreement was signed by Mohammad Said Nabulsi, chairman and chief executive officer on behalf of Jordinvest and Rajai Al Salfiti, chairman of the board, and Mohammad Kamel Abu Arida, member of the board of directors on behalf of Union Chemical and Vegetable Oil Industries (UCVOI). Union Chemical will use the proceeds of the bond mainly to expand its sunflower seeds and soya beans oils facilities. raise its capital, and retire short-term debts.

According to the agreement, Jordinvest undertakes to carry our studies, arrangements and procedures necessary for the bond issue expected to he completed by the end of January 1999. The bonds will be issued in early February having had the approval of Jordan Securities Commission. The bonds at nominal value of ID10,000 each, will mature after five years from the date of issue at an interest rate of 9.5 per cent annually payable every six months. The bonds can be converted to UCVOI's shares, at the rate JD1.3 each, after three years from the date of issue. Conditions of issue will be included in the

bond issue prospectus which will be published upon completing the procedures and obtaining the approval of the Jordan Securities Commission. Nabulsi said that this agreement is Jordinvest's first in the Jordanian capital market, and the Jordinvest has been approached by several industrial and services companies tu perform similar operations. Nabulsi believes that this and other capital financing operations, will make a tangible contribution towards helping industrial and services institutions to overcome their financial difficulties.

Industrialist outlines impediments to marketing

** THE HIGH cost of advertisements, the low income level in the Kingdom and the lack of must in local products and the preference of consumers to buy foreign products are the most important barriers for marketing in the local market, said Basel Sadeq, the commercial manager of the Gulf Foodstuffs Company, He noted that the local and international markets are in recession but he said the government can ease the effect of recession by limiting the import of foreign-made products that are similar to ones produced in Jordan.

Sadeq indicated that the high fuel prices and other production costs as well as shipping rates push up the prices of final products and accordingly, that impedes the penetration of Jordanian products into international markets and weakens the capabilities for competition. He stressed that some trade protocols must be

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR JANUARY, MONDAY 11, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services. Inc.

SRIES: (March 21 to April 19) You could get into one of

tiose arguments today that's impossible to win. No point in

ting heads. Its a waste of time and certainly there are athings you could do. For example, look at it from the

person's point of view.-YOu may decide to abandon

AURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Although your mind is far

way, it looks like your body is stuck at home. That could

cause complications and even accidents, so be careful. Its a

better day to have folks over to your house than to travel.

Why not do your shopping by telephone and fix dinner yourself instead of going out?

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) If you can get into the pro-

ject you're working on, it could be fun. Make that your

mention, because it looks like you could get a great

opportunity to advance in your career very soon. Others are

watching to see whether or not you whistle while you work.

Put on a good show for them, even if you don't feel like it.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) Today looks good for love and romance. You could end up making a big commitment,

even if you didn't think you were ready yet. You've got a

nice grand trine in water signs, which will enhance your

inmition, especially in romantic situations. Don't make

promises if you don't intend to keep them. That's one thing

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You need to be working hard.

saving your money and planning what you're going to build

next. Something solid, stable and dependable is highly rec-

ommended. Leo is the sign of children, and you may have a little difficulty growing up. Today, you get to show that you

really have — or at least that you're aware of the concept. VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Others may find you

uncharacteristically quiet today. Its not that you're blue.

You're thinking. You're studying something that's been put

in front of you. Its a difficult job, even for you, and that's

saying something. Time to hit the books. Do the homework. Consult the experts. Do what you must to gain control of the

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Today is a good day to shop for something you need for your home. Before you spend all your money, perhaps you can come up with a way to bring more in. Its possible that a friend would like to buy

something you don't need anymore. This could turn out to

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21t You're strong.

powerful, magnetic, charismatic — everything you always

wanted to be. Everybody's drawn 10 you, whether they

know it or not. They want to do whatever you have in mind.

and that's fine with you. You've got a scheme already fig-

ured out, so now. You need only put the players in place and

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21t You're

caught in a bit of squeeze today. You're supposed to do

something, but you can't. You don't have enough money

yet. You just might have to ask for a postponement. If you

handle this responsibly, there won't be any hard feelings. It might cost you a little, but that's OK, Don't despair. The

story has a bappy ending.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You'll have

more fun today if there's a team to back you up. None of

you has the whole answer, but everybody's got a little part. Something that looks impossible to you will look easy to

one of your friends. The same thing works the other way

around, too. Offer your experience freely.

that won't go over well.

be a win-win situation!

tell them to act their parts.

reconsidered and others must be activated in addition to the importance of reciprocal treatment by neighbouring countries and markets,

The commercial manager criticised the traditional financing methods describing them as a burden on the local industry. He complained, in this regard, of the high interest rates and demanded that they be lowered. Moreover, Sadeq called for looking for more feasible financing methods but, at the same time, he praised the Central Bank's allocation of JD30 million to support local industries that need low-cost financing.

He concluded by urging the government to activate the role of commercial sections at Jordanian embassies abroad and reducing the cost of subscribing to commercial fairs (Al

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| Company | - Open | Close | Chan |
| | Price | Price | |
| | BANKS | | |
| ARAS BX | 217.000 | 218.000 | +0.4 |
| NT'L Bk | 1.540 | 1.560 | + 1.3 |
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| THE HOUSING BK | 2.840 | 2.800 | - 1.4 |
| JO. KUWAIT BX | 1.650 | 1.650 | 0.0 |
| JO. ISLAMIC BK | 1.680 | 1.680 | 0.0 |
| UNION BK | 1.160 | 1.100 | - 5.1 |
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| PHILADELPHIA INS | 2.100 | 2.000 | - 4.7 |
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| ZEXPORT BK (75 | 0.910 | 0.890 | -2.2 | | | | | |
| JO. TRADING FACILITIES | 0.430 | 0,410 | -4.6 | | | | | |
| CENTRAL STORG | 0,330 | 0.310 | - 6.0 | | | | | |
| UNION INVES. CORP | 0.690 | 0,680 | -1.4 | | | | | |
| AL - EKBAL | 0.810 | 0.800 | -12 | | | | | |
| AL - SHARQ | 1.080 | 1,100 | + 1.8 | | | | | |
| AL DAWLIAH | 0.610 | 0,600 | - 1.6 | | | | | |
| ARAB INT'L TRADE | 0.210 | 0,210 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| NAMICO | 0,260 | 0.260 | - 3.8 | | | | | |
| TEXTILE & PLASTIC | 0.260 | 0.270 | + 3.8 | | | | | |
| (ZMIDDLE EAST PHAR(90 | 0.600 | 0,600 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| UNION YOBACCO | 2,800 | 2,810 | + 0.3 | | | | | |
| AL-RAZI | 0.540 | 0,540 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| UNITED ENG. IND | 0.210 | 0.210 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| NUTRI DAR | 0.690 | 0.700 | + 1.4 | | | | | |
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Trading on Lebanese bourse down 50 per cent in 1998

IRBID ELECTRICITY PORTFOLIO SECURITIES

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BEIRUT (AFP) — Trading on the Beirut Stock Exchange (BSE) was down 50 per cent last year because of the Asian financial erisis and high Lebanese pound, BSE president Gabriel Sehnawi has said.

"The volume of transactions went down from \$650 million in 1997 to \$330 million" last year, he said.

"The crisis at emerging markets prompted foreign investors to retreive their investments, and high interest rates on Lebanese treasury bonds attacted most savings of the Lebanese and those of some Gulf nationals," he said.

Sehnawi said government plans to privatise a number of public services will help boost trading on bourse. which reopened in 1996 after a forced 13-year closure during the 1975-1990 civil

Before the war there were 42 listed companies

on the exchange, but now that number has dwindled to 12 - with two of those capitalised at under \$3 million.

Sehnawi said the BSE's promorphism of \$2.4 billion could be boosted by another billion if major firms such as the Casino du Liban and the ABC superstore were to start listing their shares on

the exchange. Two new firms are to begin listing on the exchange at the end of

January, he said. Among the firms currently listed are the giant real-estate firm Solidere, the Banque Libanaise pour le Commerce and the Bank of Beirut.

Solidere -- the giant joint-stock real-estate company entrusted to rebuild Beirui's war-devastated downtown --- suffered the most among BSE shares in 1998. falling in December below its \$10 initial price before recovering slightly earlier

this month. "When Solidere, one of

the 100 largest Arab companies, opened up its capital to foreign investors in November 1997, its price went up to \$12,5 and daily bourse activity increased to \$6 million," he said.

0.260 5.400 0.880 1.940

But that boost was "promptly hit by the Asian financial crisis," he said. He added that interest

rates on treasury bonds have also been hard hit, running at 13.12 per cent on one-year bonds and 16.07 per cent on twoyears, down from more than 30 per cent at the bourse's reopening in

Sehnawi said the BSE's position could strengthened by taking part in future sovereign and private Lebanese bond issues on international markets.

The Lebanese government and several banks and industrial firms have issued \$3.5 billion in Eurobonds and other notes on the London and Luxemburg stock exchanges since 1994.

Dow may hit 10,000 soon but may not stay there

NEW YORK (AP) — Stucks were riding an express train to the sky in trading this year. prompting excited speculation that they will soon arrive at the next big milestone. Dow 10,000.

The economy is growing, inflation is low. and investors have piles of cash to invest. All of that makes Wall Street analysts confident that the Dow Jones industrial average will easily add another five per cent in the first quarter of this year and surpass the five-digit mark.
"In 30 to 60 days,

we'll be knocking on the door of 10.000." said Marshall Acuff. equity strategist at

Salomon Smith Barney. Despite the enthusiasm. Acuff and others still worry that stock prices may have risen too far, too fast, and that the market's climb has been too dependent on speculation in technology stocks. They also worry that gains in corporate profits will taper off, almost always had news for stocks.

But right now investors have dollars to invest. Some cashed out of their money-losing stocks last year to take tax writeoffs and now want to put the remaining eash back to work. Others are using year-end bonuses, pay raises, and gifts while still others are making start-of-year contributions to retirement accounts.

Assets in money market funds, where investors often park money until they decide where to invest them. ared by almost 33: billion in the past week to \$1.4 trillion. That's the largest increase in three months, said the Investment Company Institute, which keeps the figures.

With one-month money market funds yielding around 4.5 per cent, investors will move those funds into higher-yielding invest-ments like stocks, said Rick Jandrain, chief investment officer for equity securities at Banc One Investment Advisors in Columbus. Ohio.

Bulls were vindicated again Friday by a government report that employers added 378,000 jobs in December, the most in 15 months.

"The economy contin-ues just to cook," said

Charles Pradilla, chief investment strategist at SG Cowen Securities.

Still, there is some potential turbulence that could slow the trip to 10K. Continued economic growth will dash any hopes that the Federal Reserve (Fed) will again lower interest rates. Three cuts since Sept. 29 were largely responsible for the market's gains, as the Fed sought to juice the economy.

Another potential pittall is the recent drop in the dollar, to just over 110 yen on Friday from nearly 148 ven last July, The ven has risen along with Japanese interest

A weaker dollar can boost exports from the United States, but otherwise it is bad news. It discourage Japanese investors from buying dollar-denominated investments. It it gets low enough, it could pressure the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates.

Higher rates almost never good for stocks because they raise corporate operating costs and discourage consumer spending. But rates now are so low they have room to rise a little without damaging the stock rally. Pradilla said.

That leaves investors still to wrestle with the question of whether the market is too expensive, given the widely held helief that profits will soften in 1999.

Investors remember a from Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's last summer that the soaring market was the result of "irrational exuberance.

Greenspan was echoed last week by Deputy Treasury Secretary Alice Rivlin, who said that given her expeciation of a decline in profit growth this year, stocks are over-Valued.

Indomitable bull Abby Joseph Cohen of Goldman Sachs advised investors to trim stock investments slightly, saying prices were "less attractive today than in September, when they were 30 per cent lower. While Byron Wien of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter suggested the Dow could hit 10,000 as early as this month. he also predicted it will end the year lower than that it the rally continues to be confined to high-flying technology shares. "I am concerned the narrowness of the ad vance.

Acuff noted investors began this past week to broaden purchases to their purchases to include financial sertransportation vices. and retail stocks.

"We're getting a little bit better hreadth." he said. "and if it continues, it will help.



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International Handball Federation to discuss Jordan's complaint Jan. 20

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Handball Federation (JHF) President Sari Sunday International Handball Federation (IHF) would issue a ruling on Jordan's complaint of its recent "unjust disqualification" from the World Championship finals in its Jan. 20 meeting.

The meeting will issue the IHF decisinn one week hefore the draw for the World Championship finals which will be held in Egypt.

Jurdan has appealed its case with the IHF after lodging a complaint with the Asian Handhall Federation (AHF) after meetings of the Olympic Council of Asia held on the sidelines of the Asian Games in Bangkok in December.

The Kingdom had announced that

it would freeze membership in the AHF if a fair ruling was not reached regarding Jordan's disqualification from the finals.

The JHF president reiterated that Jordan was firm in its stand and quest for a fair solution as it had officially qualified to the finals which will be held in Cairo next

Hamdan said "there was a complete disregard to internal regulations and norms. If that continues we have no option but to freeze membership in the AHF."

The issue emerge at the West Asian Qualifiers where hosts Saudi Arahia took first place, while Jordan came runner up and officially quali-

However, following Jordan's 32-19 win over Bahrain, the technical committee of the championship

announced that Kuwait qualified as runner up when Bahrain's results were cancelled due to technicality in their final match against Jordan.

The technical committee scrapped Bahrain's results at the championship citing that Bahrain had handed Jordan the win hy passive play in the second half.

"Bahrain did not pull out nor did it hand us the win. On the contrary they were trying hard to narrow the gap." Hamdan said.

The technical committee of any championship does not have the authority to issue take decisions but should leave that to the federation. Similarly Asian or international regulations do not stipulate cancelling the entire results of a team but rather considering a withdrawing team as loser hy a 10-0 score."

Hamdan also pointed out that the

Slovenian referees of the match did not advise that Bahrain had a technical error but it was rather the technical committee who took that decision single-handedly.

Hamdan said Jordan now had a ranking on the map of Asian Handball after recent activity on the club and national team levels. Furthermore, he stressed that the men's and women's teams were training hard for the upcoming Pan-Arab Games in Amman under the new Crostian coach.

Bahrain has meanwhile lodged an appeal with the OCA and the IHF citing "injustice" to the Bahraini team which had players suspended in their match against Jordan before the technical committee cancelled their results.



Sixth seed Steffi Graf returns a shot during a practise round at the White City stadium in Sydney 10 January. It is the first time Graf has played in Sydney since 1984 and she has drawn a first-round match with Japan's Ai Sugiyama (AFP photo)

Broncos stampede **Dolphins** in NFL playoffs

Reigning Super Bowl champion Denver moved one victory from a return to American foothall's championship game with a 38-3 romp over Miami here Saturday,

The Broncos, who won their 18th home game in a row, will host the January 17 American Conference title game against Sunday's New York Jets-Jacksonville winner for a trip to the January 31 Super Bowl.

National Football League rushing champion Terrell Davis, kept to a season-low 29 yards by the Dolphin defense in a December 21 loss at Miami, ran for 199 yards and two touchdowns to spark the rout.

Davis scored first-quarter touchdowns on runs of one and 20 yards and Derek Loville added another on an 11-yard run in the second quarter to give Denver a 21-3 half-time lead.

Davis raced 62 yards early in the third quarter to set up Jason Elam's 32yard field goal, putting the cap on the fourth-best rushing performance in NFL history.

In the fourth quarter, Rod Smith caught a 28-yard touchdown pass from John Elway and Neil Smith returned a fumble 79 yards for a touchdown to cnmplete the Denver rout.

The Dolphins suffered their most lopsided playoff loss, replacing a 38-16 druhhing by San Franciscu in the 1985 Super Bowl. The Dolphins have not wun a playoff game away from Miami since 1972, going 0-

Miami's only points came on Olindo Mare's 22yard field goal five minutes into the secund quarter.

Dan Marino was able to recapture the form that saw him throw for 355 yards and four touchdowns in Miami's regular-season triumph over Denver. He threw for 243 yards hut was intercepted three times.

Elway threw for 182 yards and a touchdown.

Pippen wants to stay with Bulls

CHICAGO (AFP) - Scottie Pippen, whose future plans could play a pivotal rose in deciding whether or not Michael Jordan retires, wants to return to the three-time defending NBA champion Chicago Bulls.

Pippen had ripped cluh management for not signing him to a long-term deal after the Bulls won their sixth title in eight years last June, saying he would not return. But his attitude has changed, agent Jimmy

Sexton said. "Scottie Pippen will be theirs to lose," Sexton said. "Scottie loves to city of Chicago and the fans. If we can work out a deal that will work for Scottie, we would

love to stay there." Pippen reportedly wants a four-year con-tract worth \$14 million a year, the richest possible contract under the new ownersunion labor deal. With future raises, such a deal could net Pippen an average of more than \$17 million a year over the life of the

Bulls officials have hinted they are worried about a long-term deal for a man who is coming off hack surgery, even one who has played through pain to help Jordan make the Bulls a dynasty.

But Sexton said Pippen has been working out in Chicago for six weeks with no hack

NBA officials have allowed clubs to begin negotiations with players, although none can be signed until a labour deal is written hy lawyers and signed, a process expected to take until January 18.

Jordan, whose return is essential to helping the NBA win back fans angered by the labor fight, has said he wants no part of a rehuilding team and that the Bulls letting Pippen get away would be a sign to him they are rebuilding for the future and not

committed to trying to win a seventh NBA Falcons edge 49ers

Anderson ran for 113 yards and two touchdowns here Saturday, sending Atlanta Falcons to their first conference championship game with a 20-18 victory

over San Francisco. Atlanta will face Sunday's Minnesota-Arizona winner on January 17 in a National Football League semi-final, the National Conference title game, for a berth in the January 31 Super Bowl at

Atlanta coach Reeves, hack on the sidelines less than one month after heart hypass surgery, watched Anderson score on runs of 34 and 2 yards to move Ailanta one triumph from an unprecedented

Super Bowl trip. "It's unbelievable. This whole year has been incredihle," Reeves said. "We never dreamed we would be in the position we are in. We have just got to take it to the

next step. Ailanta intercepted 49ers quarterback Steve Young three times as the Falcons, 3-13 two seasons ago, won their 10th game in a row and rose to 9-0 at home this seasnn.

"It's a tremendous win for the team." Anderson said. We overcame all odds and adversity. It's a great feel-

Anderson, who carried 26 times, dedicated his game to recently deceased uncles. But he made a major mistake by running out of bounds in the final seconds. stopping the clock to give

the 49ers a final chance. "I didn't want to go out of bounds." Anderson said. "My knee planted funny chances on blowing my knee out 1 knew our defease would get the joh done. I wasn't worried about it.'

to advance in NFL playoffs

The 49ers had their chance but Young, whose last-second touchdown won a week earlier, did not have another miracle available as Atlanta's William White made a game-clinching interception on the final

play. The 49ers, who have never rallied beyond seven points to win a playoff game, capped a 13-play, 87yard scoring drive with Young's eight-yard touch-down run with 2:57 to play.

Ty Detmer threw a twopoint conversion pass to Greg Clark to pull the 49ers within the final margin. The conversion began as a kick attempt but the hall was hiked high and Detmer had to leap to grah the hall and then scramble before making the throw.

Danish kicker Morten Andersen booted two field goals after pickoffs to give Ailanta a 20-10 lead.

Eugene Rohinson's interception and 77-yard return set up a 29-yard effort late the third quarter and White's pickoff led to a 32yard field goal with 10:33

remaining.
For the second playoff game in a row, the 49ers were aided by a controversial official's call that went in their favour.

Late in the first half, Young flipped a lateral to his right side to Terry Kirby, who appeared to lose a fumhle that Atlanta defender Chuck Smith ran into the end zone for a 21-0 Falcons

But officials ruled Kirby was downed before the fumble, nullifying the Atlanta touchdown run-

A week ago, Jerry Rice had been ruled down before television replays showed was a fumble and Young made the most of a second chance by throwing the game-winning touchdown pass to defeat Green

This time, Young made a 17-yard touchdown pass to Rice, who faked out defender Ray Buchanan to cap a nine-play, 80-yard drive and put the 49ers on the scorehoard 70 seconds before half-time.

A 49er interception set up Wade Richey's 36-yard field goal on the final play of the first half, pulling the 49ers within 14-10.

San Francisco's Terrell Owens mocked Atlanta's "Dirty Bird" touchdown celehradon dance after Rice's score, ending his version of the strut hy drawing a finger along his throat.

The Falcons dominated the first half as Anderson ran for a touchdown in each quarter while Atlanta's defense held the 49ers offense in check.

San Francisco lost rusher Garrison Hearst to a broken left leg on the game's first play from scrimmage, a seven-yard run that ended with Hearst being helped off the field.

Rios concerned hamstring injury

AUCKLAND (AP) -World No. 2 Marcelo Rios admits he is concerned about a lingering hamstring injury as he puts the final touches on his Australian Open preparations.

Rios defends his Auckland Open title from Monday before heading to Melhourne, where he'll likely be the top seed following the withdrawal of Pete Sampras.

Rios was beaten in the Australian Open final last year by Petr Korda but admits his right hamstring, injured in training 10 days ago, might hold the key to his hopes of a Grand Slam title.

"It was pretty bad last week," Rios said Sunday. "I was trying to practice as well as take some days off, but it is much hetter now. I'm having it treated twice a day until I play on Tuesday."

Rios, who won seven tournaments in 1998 starting with Auckland title, said he didn't care about his Australian Open seeding.

"I don't think there is much difference between heing No. 1 or No. 2 at the Australian Open because all the players there are pretty good," Ríos said.

Rios takes on 66th ranked Romanian Andre Pavel in his first-round match on Tuesday at the Auckland Open.

"He's a strong player, he will be tough and he has been playing well," Rios said.

Second-seeded Spaniard Felix Mantilla, ranked 20, is to play a qualifier in the first round, while third seed Wayne Ferreira, of South Africa, ranked 26th in the wurld, plays New

Zealander Brett Steven.

Sydney International Martinez makes solid start

SYDNEY (AP) - Spain's Conchita Martinez scored an easy straight-sets victory over Australia's Rachel McQuillan in their first-round match at the Sydney International tournament Sunday.

The No. 5 seed won 6-0, 6-3 in one of just two maiches on the npening day of the men's and women's Australian Open leadin tournament. Alicia Molik continued a big week for

Australian teenagers when she upset No. 16-ranked Natasha Zvereva of Belarus 6-3, The 17-year-old's victory followed the

impressive run hy Australia's world junior champion Jelena Dokic. 15, who helped the country win the Hopman Cup team compe-

Molik set up a second-round clash against Swiss World No. 2 Martina Hingis.

"I've got nothing to lose, I'm the dark horse - she's probably the one with every worry in the world," Molik said.

"I've watched her dominate for so long and it'll be good to see how my game stands up to hers - I'll go out there and play the same way I did today, I think it'll be a good

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Molik, who works with former Australian No.1 Nicole Bradtke, punished Zvereva's second serve time after time, gaining breaks in the sixth game of the first set and last game of the match.

"What pleased me most was that I didn't let Natasha have a break point." Molik said. "Natasha's got good flair and a lot of touch and she can do a lot of good things but I just stayed with the way I wanted to play, just stay with her."

Eight of the world's top 16 men's players, including Alex Corretja. Par Rafter and Greg Rusedski, and 17 of the top 20 women will play the tournament on Rebound Ate courts. The Australian Open starts Jan. 18:



Australian Top seed for the Sydney International Pat Rafter takes a fall during practise with coach Tony Roche 10 January. Rafter was unhurt but he has drawn a first round match with Australia's latest tennis sensation Lleyton Hewitt (AFP photo)

Henman upsets Alami to reach Qatar Open final

DOHA (AFP) — Tim Henman stayed on course to complete a perfect launch of his 1999 season here late Saturday when he swept into the final of the \$1 million Qatar Open hy com-pleting a stylish 6-4, 6-2 victory over Moroccan Karim Alami.

The top-seeded British player, who is hidding for his fifth career title, now faces German Rainer Schuttler whn saw France's former Wimbledon finalist Cedric Pioline 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, Against Alami, Henman,

who had been taken through three difficult sets in the round hу American Jeff Tarango. made a sluw start. He dropped his opening service game and trailed 0-2 before number-one admitted after recovering his poise, spraying the court with some superh winners. Henman took a strangle-

hold on the second set when he broke Alami's second service game to lead 3-1. this time doing the damage with two superh lohs. An increasingly frustrated

Alami, who enjoyed the support of the Doha crowd throughout, earned a warning when he smashed a hall out of cnurt before coming out to serve and stay in the match at 2-5.

Henman squandered three match points but eventually clinched victory when Alami sliced a hackhand

"It's been a good start to the year so far," the British

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John Travolta ... in

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his win. But he made it clear he would not be underestimating the 22year-old Schuttler. The German, who 15

ranked a modest 111th, best Henman in Slpit last year although Henman avenged the defeat in the new ATP event in Battersea Park, London.

Schuttler, ranked 111th in the world, continued his giant-killing run hy outlasting Pioline in a two hour marathon.

It was his seventh win since arriving in Doha to play in the qualifying event and came just 24 hours after putting- out fourth-seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia

PHILADELPHIA '1 H 4 Michael Douglas & Sean Penn .. in ODA THE GAME

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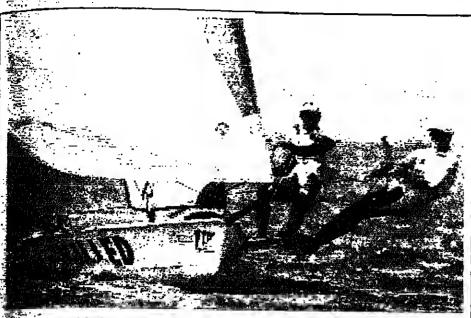
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Current world champion Chris Nicholson of Australia (L) and teammate Ed smyth (R) sail to the finish line in an early heat on the first day of the international 49er class sailed in light winds at the 1999 World Sailing Championships on Port Phillip Bay near Melbourne 10 January. A new two-man high performance skiff, the 49ers were recently given Olympic status and is the fastest of all the Olympic classes (AFP photo)

Rivaldo at the double as Barcelona iere and place

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ormer Awale BARCELONA (R) - A second-half double from Brazilian striker Rivaldo wrapped up a 4-2 victory for Barcelona in a thrilling Spanish first division clash with Athletic Bilbao on and a lot of top

In a match played in toranted to play p rential rain, the Catalan to men's playe clisb stormed into a 2-0 . Par Rahma lead with goals from Luis the top 20 km: Enrique Martinez and on Rehound t Philip Cocu, before Ismael Urzaiz revived the visitors shortly after the break with his 11th strike of the sea-

> Rivaldo immediately snuffed out Bilbao hopes of a-comeback with a neatly taken finish and it was the Brazilian who clinched a third successive win for Barcelona with a late backfieel after Julen Guerrero had got the visitors back in intention with 18 minutes

> Victory for Barcelona takes them up to second place in the table, a point behind leaders Mallorca and level with Celta Vigo, Real Madrid and Valencia. who are all in action on Sunday.

Louis van Gaal's fast improving team made the best of the poor conditions throughought the game.

The breakthrough came on 22 minutes as Sergi Barjuan's cross was headed home by the ever willing Luis Enrique, who outjumped the Bilbao defence comfortably. inora lila.

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Barcelona's second was the pick of the six goals and came as the home side once again opted for the aerial route.

ation (Links) III. Rivaldo's long ball fororla differ ward was beaded on by kulling ramby of Patrick Kluivert and Dutchman Cocu struck a spectacular volley past City his street Imanol Etxeberria.

arity in a in the Bilbao did well to come back in the second balf. Urzaiz winning the race for Transcrato a loose ball after Ruud Hesp could only party Guerrero's long-range

> But Rivaldo's decisive contribution — his first a

finish after a throughheader from Sergi. his second an astute back-heel after the ball had been held up in the penalty area made sure that even a second Bilbao strike from Guerrero would be insuffi-

LOCAL SPORTS SCENE



Aref Hussein to move to Kufrsoum

AMMAN - Kufrsoum Club is negotiating with Al Hussein Club to sign Aref Hussein, one of Jordan's veteran soccer players, as of the 1999 soccer season. According to sources, negotiations are moving on a positive note and Al Hussein Club has asked for JD5.000 to release the player. Kufrsoum, who last year won the Federation Shield title, last week signed Mohammad Batayneh of the Northern Ghor Sheikh Hussein Club for JD1,500.



Sweden's Thomas Enqvist holds his trophy after winning the AAPT Championships at the Memorial Drive in Adelaide (AFP photo)

Enqvist wins Adelaide men's hardcourt title

ADELAIDE (R) - Second seed Thomas Enqvist of Sweden beat defending champion Llevton Hewitt of Australia to win the Adelaide men's hardcourt tennis tournament on Sunday.

Enqvist, the World No. 22, overcame a slow start to take the title 4-6 6-1 6-2.

The Swede was thrilled with the win, after having been forced to take three months off last year with a foot injury. "It's very important for my confidence to feel I can play good tennis and win tournaments again." Enqvist said after his victory.

Hewitt, 17, became the lowest ranked singles victor in ATP history when he won in Adelaide last year with a rank-

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Dakar race claims 40th victim

PARIS (R) --- The Dakar rally has claimed its 40th victim in 20 years, a policeman who died after a collision between a rally car and a Burkina Faso police vehicle. Race organiser Hubert

night near the end of the eighth stage at Bobo Dioulasso in Burking Faso. "We are shocked and we will apologise to the Burkina Faso government," Auriol told Sunday's edition of the

Auriol said he was shocked

by the accident late on Friday

sports daily L'Equipe. Five Mauritanian spectators were killed in an accident in last year's race. The last compeditor to die was French motorcyclist Jean-Pieme Leduc in 1997, The event's creator, Frenchman Thierry Sabine perished in a helicopter crash in 1986.

Basketball federation cancels all penalties, accepts resignation of vice-president

By Aleen Bannayan

AMMAN -- The Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) Sunday announced that they were cancelling all suspensions and fines imposed on clubs and players during the 1998 season.

A JBF source said the move "comes as Jordanians rejoice after the recovery of His Majesty King Hussein and his return soon to the country after six months of treatment for cancer of the lymph glands in the United States,"

The lifting of penalties means the four month ritt between the IBF and Al Jazireli Cluh will probably be resolved after the former suspended four of Al Jazireh's players and imposed a heavy line when the club decided to pull its players from national teams citing "discriminatory treat-

ment" on the part of the IBF.

Al Jazireh's decision to withdraw its players from the men's national team on the evening of their departure to an international tournament in Taipei, started a controversy which has not since been resolved.

The Ministry of Culture and Youth intervened and tried to bring the two sides together, however, the JBF board insisted on carrying out regulations and submitted a mass resignation which was later on retracted.

The issue indefinitely delayed the start of national team trainin and with the Pan-Arab Games only eight months away, the teams are still idle awaiting training to hegin.

The women's team has not been regrouped since the July 1997 Pan-Arah Games while the men's team last

played in the Asian Championship last year. Both teams missed participation the Bangkok Asian Games in December.

Local competitions were also restricted to only three events drawing enticism from many clubs who had prepared their players and had spent allocated funds for that purpose.

In its latest meeting the JBF also decided to annul all subcommittees and accept the resignation of vicepresident Nu man Asfour from the

The JBF also congratulated Al Wihdai and Homeneimen clubs for their promotion to the First Division and called club representatives for a meeting to discuss the 1999 season.

Push begins for Samaranch resignation amid 2002 Summer Games chaos

SALT LAKE CITY (AFP) -International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch should resign in the wake of a bribery scandal, a member of the 2002 Winter Games organising committee declared.

Ken Bullock, on the executive board of the Salt Lake City organisers, said Samaranch should step down to restore trust in the Olympic movement the way 2002 Gaines executives Frank Joklik and Dave Johnson did on Friday.

"Until President Samaranch follows Frank's example, the Olympic movement will not be able to move forward," Bullock said.

Joklik, president of the organising group, and vice-president Johnson, a major figure in Salt Lake City's hampered vital corporate fundrais-

IOC members were treated to cash payments, fuitions for relatives, expensive gifts, free health care. housing and travel by a Salt Luke bid committee trying to buy enough votes to defeat rival IOC suitors.

Now the IOC, United States Olympic Committee, 2002 organisers and U.S. Justice Department are conducting investigations into the Samaranch has admitted accept-

ing gifts of firearms from Sult Lake organisers, but said dollar limits on bribe gifts imposed on other IOC members do not apply to him.

U.S. IOC member Anita DeFrantz defended Samaranch but said an

January 24, could force other IOC members out.

"I don't think we will have executions," she said, "But we will have fewer members,

The scandal nright even enable Samuranch to increase his power by shifting the selection power for future Games from the IOC to a select committee headed by the Spanish Olympic hoss.

Corruption in the wake of sucb absolute authority undermines the public trust in the Olympics, said Utah governor Mike Leavitt, wbo wants action from the IOC to prevent such abuses in the future.

"The culture of corruption has taken root because of a lack of accountability," he said. "Power agenda of reform and carry it out."

Leavitt also said that Salt Lake

organisers were only doing what they felt was a necessary part of the bid process to stay on pace with rivals. "There is a sinister dark corner of

corruption in the Olympic movement," he said. "This subculture of IOC corruption didn't start in Salt Lake City. But it must end here. The integrity of the rings must be restored.

Leavitt also gave city officials bud news - the deal they thought shielded tuxpayers from bearing the cost of any debt from the Games is against the law.

in the process, it likely would have

IOC prohe, expected to be complete eroded public support for bidding on the Games,

Now Utah taxpayers have no guarantee they will not be liable for cost overruns on a \$1.4 billion budget - a budget that will have a much tougher time raising corporate support in the wake of the scandal.

The U.S. Olympic Committee expects trouble meeting its original goal of \$250 million in corporate supprt by October 1, so the deadline has been extended.

Jobn Krimsky, the U.S. Olympic corporate sponsors recruiter, said only the telecommunications firm U.S. West has threatened to withdraw support over the scandal. U.S. West will not make a sched-

uled \$5 million payment by January 31 as part of its \$50 million pledge winning Games bid, resigned in the "unchecked is power abused. I call to the Games, waiting until the wake of a bribery scandal that has, upon the Olympic family to form an "scandal investigations are complete to commit to the deal.

> Krimsky said that without Joklik and Johnson resigning the way they did, he likely would not have been able to produce the corporate money needed to finance the 2002 Games.

> "It would have been extremely difficult, and perhaps maybe not possible, to raise the funds necessary for the Games," he said. "We will soon be back on track.

Many sponsors have been with us through wars and boycotts. They will be back. We're going to make our numbers. It's just going to take longer.'

One bit of good news passed Had that fact been known earlier along from federal officials to state lawmakers is that they can count

upon federal dollars for Gamesrelated transponation construction, much of it already under way.

Even those decisions have been controversial, with one ski resort owner gaining long-term post-Olympic benefits from a more direct highway to the airport after having been named an Olympic ski

So who would want to take the job overseeing the 2002 Games organizers? Speculation here has centered on a former president of the area's National Basketball Association team and a 1988 Olympic official.

Dave Checketts, past president of the NBA's Utah Jazz, is president of the holding company that owns the New York Knicks, New York Rangers and Madison Square Garden arena. He has made no comment on reports he will be considered for the job.

In line to be chief executive officer is Roger Jackson, a member of the 1988 Calgary Winter Games organizing committee who is on an IOC commission overseeing plans for the 2002 Games.

Whether that makes him too close 10 IOC-level corruption for Utah supponers is uncertain, but organizers have said they definitely want someone with Utah ties to take

Such local trust will likely be vital to securing the 30,000 volunteers and ensuring faith that the hinne of 600 employees over the next three years will be done on the hasis of

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NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

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10 Pass 4º Pass

30 Pass 4º Pass

Opening lead: Two of ∇

"Interesting hond," remarked the kibitzer. "Declarer lost a trick in a suit where there was no loser ond got it buck later with interest to land a controct that was in jeopland a confroct that was in jeop-ordy." This was the hand that ordy. This was the hond cumment.
North had a choice of poor rebids
— o heart raise with only threecard support or one no trump without a club stopper. With a perfectly
balanced hand, North rightly, in
our opinion, chose the more descriptive one no trump. But South

in hearts once North showed prefer ence
Reluctant to lead from an honor
in the unbid spade sun, West

selected a passage frump for the apening salvu. Beclarer's problem was alwious. The only danger to the land was for East to gain the lead to shoot a club through the king. The solution was a masterpiece of advances.

Declarer wan the opening lead in during and immediately led a low spade, finesping the ten West won with the queen but could not attack clubs, so the defender exited with onother trump, taken in dummy The king of spades was eleated from hand, a diamond was led to the are and the ace of spaces was easied for a diamond discard. Now the jack of diamonds was led for a ruffing finesse, and the defenders had in counter.

If West held the king, the club

suit would again be impervious to nunck and there was still the king of trumps in dummy as on entry to diseard two mure clubs from hand on the diamonds. When the jack of diamonds held, declorer sluffed o club and continued with the dio mund ten. East covered, declarer ruffed, returned to dummy with the king of hearts, in the process extracting the last enemy fang, and discarded another club on the nine of diamonds. Declarer could now affired in lead a club to the king in afford to lead a club to the king it an ellori ju store an overtrick. No link!

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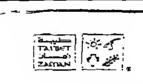
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Saudi Arabia, Egypt urge Iraqis to overthrow Saddam

S. Arabia to recommend easing of sanctions

JEDDAH (AP) — Saudi Arabia's official news agency on Sunday urged Iraqis to oust their leader, Saddam Hussein. a call echoed by Egypt's foreign minister.

These were the first statements by Arab nations explicitly demanding Saddam's removal and came in the wake of blistering criticism by President Saddam's regime of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and

Also Sunday, foreign ministers of Arab Gulf nations began a closed-door meeting in Jeddah to discuss U.N. trade sanctions on Iraq, imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The discussions were behind closed doors, but an official said a Saudi proposal on calling for easing U.N. trade sanctions on Iraq will win wide support. The official spoke on condition of

anonymity. The Saudi proposal could be an effort to show that while it opposes Iraq's regime it is sympathetic to the plight of common Iragis suffering from eight years of shortages because of the sanctions.

In a commentary released just before the foreign minister's meeting began, the official Saudi Press Agency

U.S. officials have confirmed

key details of accounts sug-

gesting collusion between the

U.S. and UNSCOM over

Iraq, U.S. News and World

it has substantiated allega-

tions by former U.N.

weapons inspector Scott

Ritter that the U.S. heavily

influenced the timing and

nature of confrontations with

In particular it reported that

the United States asked for

the March 8 inspection of the

Ministry of Defence even

though Iraq's Deputy Prime

The magazine reported that

Report said Sunday.

accused Saddam of killing and torturing thousands of Iraqis. Calling him the "Baghdad tyrant," the commentary said it is the "Iraqi people who ...

need a revolution" to topple

The dispatch was signed off by the news agency's political editor, who was not named. Such a sign-off is normally used for columns written by the country's information

In similar comments to be published Monday in a Berlin newspaper, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Saddam is "shaming the entire Arab region through his poli-

The Berliner Kurier news-paper quoted Mussa as saying that Saddam has caused "unceasing suffering to his

Traq is a rich country that has become poor under Saddam Hussein's regime. We are of the opinion that he is no longer capable of being responsible for his country's politics... Iraq needs a new government," Musa was quoted as saying. A copy of the interview was released

In recent days, Iraqi newspapers and officials have accused Egypt of being a U.S.

U.S. sources confirm key details of

UNSCOM-U.S. cooperation: Report

Chief U.N. weapons inspec-

tor Richard Butler met twice-

weekly with the U.S. envoy to

discuss operations by the

U.N. Special Commission on

disarming fraq, it continues in

And it quotes a U.S. official

as saying: "We gave him sug-

gestions. I'm not saying we

controlled him, but he took

On the question of UNSCOM's final critical

with U.N. weapons inspec-

our advice a lot."

an "act of war."

puppet. On Sunday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Sahhaf accused Saudi Arabia and Kuwait of aiding the U.S.-British bombardment last month on Iraqi defence and other installations.

An indication of the hardening Saudi stand against Iraq came in an article in the Saudiowned Ashraq Al Awsat newspaper Sunday, which quoted an unnamed Saudi source as saying: "We will not support the Iraqi regime... the Saudi position is to support the Iraqi people."

Ashraq Al Awsat and another Saudi paper, Al Hayat, said the Saudi initiative on easing the U.N. sanctions would propose that Iraq be allowed to buy and sell all goods except military equipment or material that could be used for

The U.N. Security Council has said the sanctions will not be lifted until Iraq eliminates its weapons of mass destruc-

Baghdad's relations with a number of Arab countries deteriorated in the aftermath of the Dec. 16-19 airstrikes, which aimed at punishing Iraq for its failure to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors responsible for dismantling



LAUGHING CELEBRATION. People of all ages practise Hasya Yog, a new form of yogic laughter, as part of a three-hour laughter fair at the Shivaji Park ground in central Bombay Sunday. Twenty thousand members of the laughter club from all over India and abroad took part in the event to celebrate World Laughter Day (AFP photo)

Amnesty launches campaign over child victims of war

LONDON (AFP) — Children have become the deliberate targets of war, with hundreds thousands actively involved in fighting and millions others brutalised and made homeless, according to Amnesty International.

Launching a campaign Monday to pluck children out of the killing zones, the buman rights organisation released a report highlighting some of the worst cases of abuse it found.

They included children being forced to kill one another, often dazed with alcobol and drugs. Others were massacred, mutilated or taken into slavery or had to watch as their parents were slaughtered

Even those who managed to

The report, "Children in the Firing Line," was timed to coincide with a U.N. working group meeting in Geneva from Monday to discuss raising from 15 to 18 the minimum age for recruitment into

'Even a warlord may be persuadable to recognise the

ingly stern warnings from the

armed forces, major players

in Turkey's turbulent politics

who have staged three coups

The generals at the weekend

issued a strong implicit warn-

ing that Virtue, the largest

party in parliament, could be

outlawed as a threat to

The warning, clearly direct-

ed at the Islamists, was con-

tained in a 14-page pamphlet with the deceptively banal

title "Daily Issues" and dis-

tributed to Turkish daily

"Our democracy will be

strengthened if political for-

mations that will destroy

democracy by abolishing sec-

ularism are banned," the

newspapers in a press kit.

rights of children," said Maggie Black, one of a panel of experts at a news conference faunching the campaign.

The report details accounts

from the likes of a 15-year-old girl, forcibly recruited into the Lord's Resistance Army in She told Amnesty she was ordered to kill another child

In Sri Lanka a boy and enjoyed hearing the

A study in Kwanda tound that 16 per cent of children had had to hide under dead bodies in order to survive

The report also highlights reports of children being murdered in Afghanistan, Algeria, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo,

Often the killings were carried out by rebels, but others were perpetrated by government forces. In some cases children were abducted as

"Millions of children have seen what no human being should ever have to see," said Amnesty campaign coordinator Rob Beasley.
Hundreds of thousands

have been forced to do things not even a trained soldier should ever have to do."

The report estimates that 300,000 children are active combatants, and 14 million are refugees. It also says children make up over a third of

war casualties. Two million children bave least 10 million have witnessed brutality such as the

murder of family members. Whereas at the start of the century some 90 per cent of war casualties were military, now 90 per cent are civilians. the vast majority women and

As well as the risk of death or serious injury, and psychovive into adulthood, girls are often used as sex slaves for older soldiers.

Amnesty's campaign is two-pronged. Firstly, ensure the minimum age for recruitment is raised to 18. Britain, for example, recruits from age 16.

Even if the U.N. group reaches agreement, all it can do is tack an optional protocol onto the 1989 U.N. convention on the rights of the child.

The second goal, Arnnesty said, is to get Britain to halt exports of small arms to countries where children are likely to be caught up in conflict.

That would involve more than two thirds of African and Asian countries to which been killed in armed conflicts Britain sells small arms. over the last 10 years and at including Turkey, Sri Lanka and Uganda, it said

In a statement, the Foreign Office insisted export licences were not given if there was a "clear identified risk" that weapons would be used "for internal repression."

It said Britain was privately investigating reports in 20 countries around the world of children under the age of 15 being used in armed conflict.

Baptism of fire

MOSCOW (AFP) — A Russian Orthodox priest accidentally set off a hand grenade after a bout of drunken toasts at a baptism in a village Northeast of Moscow, ITAR-TASS reported on Sunday. The 45-year-old priest had been downing alcohol with the baby's grandmother when he handled the grenade and it went off, a police spokesman in Yaroslavi said. Both were injured. The priest has so far been unable to explain why he ended up holding an explosive device.

Beninese celebrated an annual voodoo religions festival on Sunday, heading for the historic beach of Outdah to pray to the god Mahu for a peaceful 1999. Several ceremonies had already taken place at Ouldah on Friday at the Mage in corder home of Daagbo Housen Hounan, one of the leaders of the cult which has a devout following across this former French colony. Voodoo adepts, public nersonalities and some 200. visitors from Haiti, Ghana and Nigeria turned out at Ouidah and beaches in the capital Cotonou and Fidjrosse.

human fossil found

More More Berhane Asfaw. Ethiopian member of the team, said a human skull believed to be 2 1/2 million to 3 million years old also was found at the site.

Woman backed over child from dead husband

woman who gave birth to 8 baby boy after she was impregnated with sperm from her dead husband said on Sunday she had received 500 letters of SEP port from around the world. Diane Blood named the baby Liam Stephen Blood after his father Stepben, who died of meningitis in 1995. The child was born on Decill. a month premature. She told BBC Television Following the birth of Liam I have had around

At least 16 dead in violence in Algeria

ALGER (AFP) — At least southern town of Medea. 16 people were killed over two days in violence linked to Algerian armed Islamist groups, press reports said

On Saturday morning, three people were murdered at a fake checkpoint manned hy armed Islamists near Lakhdaria in the Bouira region, some 120 kilometers east of Algiers, newspapers reported.

Two of the victims had their throats cut and the third was shot hy a splinter organisation of the Armed Islamic Group.

One newspaper said five people were killed at this checkpoint.

In the Blida region, south of the capital, three travellers on a main road were killed and one injured in a hail of automatic weapons fire. A policeman was killed

and a trader seriously injured Saturday morning when two armed men attacked a market in Reda Houhou in cen-

A 15-year-old boy was killed Friday night near the be between 50 and 100.

One person was killed and six injured Saturday at a fake checkpoint between Tabla and Larbaa, 70 kilometres

least five vehicles. A policeman was murdered Friday in an ambush in Baghlia, around 100 kilometers east of Algiers, according to the daily El Khabar.

south of Algiers, where

armed Islamists torched at

A hunter was killed and mutilated near Afanana, in the Tiaret region, 300 kilometres southwest of the capital.

Saturday, security On forces killed two armed Islamists in Algeria and three in the western town of

Since the beginning of Holy Month of Ramadan on Dec. 19, more than 100 people have been killed in attacks hlamed on armed Islamist groups.

It is not known how exactly many armed Islamists have been killed over this period, although press reports suggest the figure to

States a "preview." The preview came one day before the United States used

it to justify December's airstrikes on the country durthe U.N., Bill Richardson, to ing Operation Desert Fox.

Furthermore, throughout 1998 Butler routinely gave Richardson and his successor Peter Burleigh, an opportunity to comment on UNSCOM reports before they were delivered to the Security Council, sources told the magazine.

'It collaborated with us on a lot of them," said an report on Iraqi compliance American diplomat.

secularist parties, under heavy

pressure from a military

alarmed by rising Islamist

activism and political paraly-

sis, on Sunday appeared close

to a deal to form a new gov-

emment after weeks of chaos.

a staunch secularist who has

refused to deal with the Islam-

based Virtue Party, said he

had gathered sufficient sup-

port from conservative parties

to form an interim govern-

touches to the cabinet today,"

Anatolia news agency quoted

him as saying. He is expected

to submit the package to

President Suleyman Demirel

Progress toward Ecevit's

early this week.

"We will put the finishing

Leftist leader Bulent Ecevit.

Minister Tareq Aziz warned tions, the magazine charges this would be tantamount to that Butler allowed the United

in front of them. nee suner deprivation hunger as refugees.

armed forces.

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's government followed increas-

since 1960.

democracy.

who tried to flee, forced to watch as a boy was hacked to death for failing to raise the alarm, and given 35 days' training before being sent off to fight.

described how, after joining rebel forces aged 11, he once held a child by the legs and bashed its head against a wall, mother scream.

massacres.

Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone and southern Sudan.

mass-circulation daily Sabah

quoted the pamphlet as say-

"No democracy would be

obliged to allow a polinical

formation that uses democrat-

ic means to destroy it," the

pamphlet said. The constitu-

tional court outlawed Virtue's

predecessor last year for try-

ing to suhvert the secularist

The pamphlet was also seen

politicians to overcome.

While the secularist vote is

split between a number of

bickering left- and right-wing

parties, the Islamists are unit-

ed and control an efficient

campaigning machine that

squabbling that has seen five

governments fall since 1995.

as a warning to secularist

constitution.

from Turkey's urban poor.

Turkey has been without an

established government since

November, when the conserv-

ative-led coalition of Mesut

Yilmaz was toppled in a par-

liamentary vote over corrup-

If Ecevit can form a govern-

ment, it is only expected to

stay in office until April when

elections are scheduled, 20

months before they would

Newspapers at the weekend

also quoted from a training

manual issued at an army

academy that referred to the

war that established Turkey as

a secular republic on the

wreckage of the Ottoman

"A new War of National

Empire early this century.

tion allegations.

normally be due.

garners significant support. Liberation must be launched

logical problems if they sur-

Turk army warns Islamists as secularists form government with determination against Islamic activism that threat-

> manual was quoted as saying. Turkey's secularist establishment, who look to the army for leadership, suspect the Islamists of wanting to replace the secularist national charter with one based on Islamic law.

ens the secular republic," the

The military pronouncements followed a series of warnings from senior generals in recent weeks about Islamist activism and continued political instability. Conservative powerbroker

and True Path Party leader Tansu Ciller, in rare criticism of the army, said last week the generals should not comment so frequently on domestic

not use force to rescue British hostage Yemen will

SANAA (R) — Yemen on Sunday promised it would not use force to rescue a Britisb oil worker being held

hostage hy tribesmen. A British embassy official said Ambassador Victor Henderson had met Yemen's prime minister and interior

"They assured him that authorities will not use force with the kidnappers," he said. Yemeni officials bad earlier

said that the kidnappers of John Brooke, an employee of U.S. oilfield services firm Halliburton Co, had demanded the release of a fellow tribesman arrested on charges of sabotage.

Brooke was kidnapped in an area east of the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Saturday just two weeks after four hostages -- three Britons and one Australian - were killed during a shootout between their militant Islamist abductors and Yemeni forces.

Britain feared the Yemeni authorities might have attacked the hideout of the captors - who appeared to have a political agenda without first giving time for a negotiated solution, although Yemen insisted the kidnappers had already begun shoot-

But the latest kidnapping appeared, like almost all such abductions in Yemen, to serve tribal interests. British Foreign Secretary

Rohin Cook said on Saturday that he was deeply concerned and that it was vital that the two governments should cooperate closely.

Peace Centre announces Israeli-Palestinian cooperation projects

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An array of \$60 million. foreign political leaders gathered here Sunday to "demonstrate their support for peace" between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Peres Centre for Peace, which bad invited them, used the occasion to announce the launch of a series of Israeli-Palestinian coop-

Nobel Peace Prize winners and The Nobel peace laureates attending included former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, South African Bishop Desmond Tutu, former South African President Frederik de Klerk, former Costa Rican President Oscar Sanchez and former U.S. tional convention called by the order to enable Palestinians to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger centre and on Monday are to meet develop their capacities in the field

Minister Shimon Peres himself.

Also present was Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, a member of the peace centre's board, and top Palestinian officials and 150 busi-

They are attending an internaeration projects, worth a total of as well as former Israeli Prime Palestinian President Yasser Arafat of high technology. Economic cancelled last November because elections scheduled for May 17.

in the West Bank town of Ramallah. U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa are expected to join them on Monday evening. Peres said the centre hoped to

help establish "islands of cooperation" and industrial centres in

cooperation between Israel and its Arab neighbours was to have been one of the keystones of the Middle East peace process when it was launched by Peres, but it has foundered as the process has run into difficulties:

A scheduled meeting of the Economic Conference for the Middle East and North Africa was

of the stalemate in the peace process. Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu in December postponed indefinitely the second stage of an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank agreed under October's Wye accords.

Palestinians fear that the peace process will remain in abeyance during the campaign for Israeli ading Albanian

surveille

Woman jalled for assault with slippers

CAIRO (AFP) - A woman who struck her mother-in-law with slippers after she refused to help her do household chores has been sentenced to three months in jail, judicial officials said. The verdict was issued. Saturday by a court in the central Egyptian town of Beni Suef after Zakiya Ahdul Rahim, 30, hit her mother-in-law Ahdul Meguid with a pair of slippers and scratched her, Abdul Meguid, 60, suf. fered bruises and-washriefly hospitalised.

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Benin celebrates voodoo festival-

COTONOU (AFP) - --

5-million-year-old

ADDIS ABABA (AP) 💳 Fossils of a prehistoric man believed to be 5 million years old have been discovered in northeastern Ethiopia, a newspaper report said Sunday. A team of researchers representing 13 countries found the fessils in the Awash Valley. where the 3.2 million-yearold partial skeleton known as Lucy was discovered in 1974. One of the researchers, Professor Tim White of the University of California at Berkeley. described the latest find as "extraordinary." Dr.
Berhane Asfaw.

LONDON (R) — A British 500 cards and letters from people I don't know from all over the world and one from Australia results.